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Hebron Centre Closed for Settler Celebration

The Arab Hebron market was closed, the city put under curfew and traffic stopped for three-and-a-half hours Thursday night, October 18, while some 7000 settlers and MKs celebrated the feast of *Tora Hakefot* in the heart of the city. Ariel Sharon, the Israeli minister of industry and trade, said thousands would celebrate the occasion next year in the heart of Nablus.

The night celebration included political speeches and religious dancing. Slogans were shouted and posters raised in favour of the Jewish terror underground and their actions against the Arab population.

Sharon addressed the celebrants saying that Jews have been living in Hebron for thousands of years and that Jews will continue living in all parts of Israel. In a statement of provocation directed at residents of Nablus, he said thousands of Jewish settlers would observe *Hakefot* next year in the heart of the largest West Bank city. Ultra-right-wing Knesset members Haim Druckman, Gershon Safat and Meir Kahane were also present at the festival.

The celebration, sponsored by the Committee for the Defence of the Underground Settlers, caused a dispute between officials of the Israeli government and Israeli liberal figures. Residents of Hebron remained at home during the celebration and were unable to display their protest. The dismissed deputy mayor of Hebron, Mustafa Natshe, protested the move, however, in a letter last week to Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

Tsali Reshef, spokesperson for Peace Now, told *Al Fajr* the celebration was an "illegal act with a provocative nature which would damage relations between Arabs and Jews." Peace Now activists sent a petition to Rabin calling on him to prevent settlers from holding the celebration. Rabin rejected their request saying that it was not the first time for the celebration since a similar observance took place in Hebron last year.

Peace Now activists were informed, however, that the scope of the event would be limited. Israeli army units in Hebron had been instructed to close off the market area on October 18 and to impose curfew on other parts of the city to enable settlers to hold their celebration without protests from local Palestinians. MK Ron Cohen, from the Citizens Rights Movement, also asked the Israeli defence minister to stop settlers from carrying out their celebration.

In his telegramme sent to Yitzhak Rabin October 12 Natshe demanded the defence ministry adopt positive measures in favour of the Arab population in the city. He voiced his protest of the *Hakefot* observance as well as listing other demands such as the restoration of Hebron's dissolved municipal council until elections could be held in the occupied territories. Natshe also asked for the cancellation of previous measures including the grabbing of the city's bus station by Israeli settlers. Natshe complained that settlers are taking the law into their own hands and demanded a stop to the building of more settlements in Hebron.

Students of Three West Bank Colleges on Strike

West Bank higher education entered a time of crisis this month as internal conflicts between students and administrations at three institutions escalated into strike action. The prolonged conflicts, over matters of finance and academics have led to the *de facto* closure of Bir Zeit University, the Arab Nursing College and the College of Science and Technology in Abu Dis.

Bir Zeit

The student strike at Bir Zeit University entered its third week October 20 as negotiations between students and administration failed to reach an acceptable compromise. Students are protesting a tuition hike for new students. Students say that last year's tuition of JD120 was not enforced by the administration and that few new students paid more than JD20. This year the BZU board is asking for able students to pay the full original tuition as well as a hike making fees for new students between JD140-180.

Nabil Qassis, the acting head of the university academic council told *Al Fajr* that the university administration has provided a number of compromise suggestions in order to solve the dispute but that students have rejected them. The latest university offer calls for a two-week postponement of the board of trustees tuition hike decision. Within the two-week period the tuition problems of students who have not yet paid will be discussed. So far, 400 of the 550 new students have paid the tuition fee.

Jamal Idris, a member of the BZU student council told *Al Fajr* that the board of trustees must cancel or temporarily suspend their tuition hike decision. Another student council member Samir Nasser said that students would be willing to return to classes if the administration agrees on a "temporary cancellation of the board of trustees decision." He said that governments are reversable, "so why should the board of trustees' decision be so sacred?"

The university board issued a statement agreeing to a number of other student demands. The board agreed to set up a special committee consisting of students, faculty and administration to look into future tuition decisions, not to take future decisions without first consulting the students, to transfer any money left over from the tuition payments after operation costs to the student council financial assistance treasury, to increase special student cases from two to six percent and to provide for space in the annual university catalogue for the student council to submit an entry.

Students dismissed most of the administration's concessions as being mere whitewash. Some students doubted that the concessions would actually be carried out.

A group of local personalities who have attempted to mediate the crisis were unable to reach a compromise. Dr. Amin Khatib, head of the West Bank Charitable Associations Federation, told *Al Fajr* that he and Samiha Khalil, head of the Family Rehabilitation Society, met with both administration and students October 23. Khatib said he received a student commitment not to ask for a total cancellation of the board of trustees' decision. Students have instead asked for an indefinite postponement of the decision. "I am sure that I can convince the administration to postpone the decision for one month," said Khatib "but students have to accept this compromise."

Student council member Jamal Idris explained that students have not had time to adjust to the tuition raises. "Last year almost no student paid more than JD20," he said, adding, "Now the university wants to impose full payment of the tuition plus the hike." He said that the student council is willing to help the university in its new tuition policy, but the university has to "do that gradually."

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Students at the Arab College of Nursing in al-Bireh stage a sit-in protest at administration offices for increased student privileges/AO photo

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RESISTANCE ATTACKS CONTINUE

600th Israeli Fatality in Lebanon

An Israeli soldier, Alon Tzur, became the 600th Israeli fatality in Lebanon since the beginning of the Israeli invasion in June 1982, according to official Israeli military reports.

Tzur, who died October 20, suffered from fatal injuries incurred when a rocket-propelled grenade was fired at his vehicle near the Zahrani bridge in south Lebanon.

Four other anti-occupation operations took place in the area October 24. A booby-trapped bomb exploded under an Israeli patrol travelling on the road to Hinawi village near Tyre. Lebanese sources reported that all the Israeli soldiers in the vehicle were killed and the vehicle itself completely destroyed. Israel has not confirmed the report.

A 107-millimetre Katyusha rocket was also fired the same day at a military Israeli liaison unit in Nabatiyeh. Israeli military sources reported that the rocket struck the building but claimed that no one was hurt. In another incident the same day three rocket-propelled grenades were fired at a building housing members of the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) in the western sector of south Lebanon eight kilometres north of Juwaiya. The grenades caused slight damage to the structure.

In a fourth incident RPG rocket and automatic fire were directed at an SLA unit in a dawn attack near Ma'arakeh village in south Lebanon.

Israeli soldiers were attacked twice October 21. In the first incident light weapons fire was opened at a military patrol in Sidon's centre. Another Israeli patrol travelling in Saksakiya village was also attacked with light weapons fire. The Israeli military spokesperson claimed that there were no casualties in either attack.

Two Israeli navy personnel — staff sergeant Mark Dubrasky and corporal Meir Pasmido — were wounded October 19 in an evening exchange of fire with a rubber dinghy belonging to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC). The PFLP-GC announced last week that two Palestinian fighters in the rubber dinghy were killed in the clash. They were on their way to attack an Israeli officers' club across the border in what was termed a hostage raid when they were intercepted by an Israeli gunboat.

Lebanese national fighters attacked an Israeli patrol travelling south of Rashidiya October 19 with light arms fire. The Israeli military spokesperson claimed that there were no casualties in the incident.

An Israeli soldier was wounded in a clash between armed gunmen and the Israeli army near Bater al-Shouf, north of Jezzine October 20. The Israeli military source claimed that three attackers were killed. In another clash near Jezzine, the Israeli military spokesperson reported that Israeli forces wounded a fighter and took him prisoner.

In an attempt to destroy the resistance movement Israeli authorities are practising tough measures in south Lebanon, including combing areas and villages and arresting residents. They also are reported to have set up a network of agents and collaborators in south Lebanon.

Members of the Israeli anti-war *Yesh Gvul* movement held a demonstration in Jerusalem outside the Hamashbir department store following the announcement of the 600th Israeli fatality. The demonstrators called for an immediate withdrawal from Lebanon.

During the funeral for Alon Tzur, a number of his friends criticised Israeli policy in Lebanon. "This is too much, we must get out of Lebanon," said Meir Avni, the secretary of Shamir kibbutz. Avni said, "Lebanon has been a land that devours our sons for more than two years. What are we doing there?"

9 Youths Tell Court of Torture

Nine Palestinian youths described to the Israeli military court in Jenin October 16 details of torture by Israeli interrogators at Fara'a prison after their arrests October 4. The youths were apparently tortured in order to extract confessions from them concerning their alleged participation in an illegal sit-in and stone-throwing incident.

The youths' confessions are now being used as the basis of the prosecution's case against them. Fathi Shbeita, lawyer for the nine, has asked the court to rule the confessions inadmissible on grounds that they were extracted under torture. The court adjourned October 16 without taking a decision in the case.

According to Shbeita, Israeli border patrol guards roamed Jenin streets following a sit-in strike at the Jenin office of the International Red Cross October 4 in solidarity with striking prisoners at Jnaid prison. Shbeita said the Israelis arbitrarily arrested the nine youths.

The defendants told the court that they were subjected to brutal and inhumane treatment while detained at the Fara'a prison. They said that they were made to remain standing for four consecutive days. While standing, the interrogators placed sacks on their heads, beat them and pricked their fingers with straight pins.

Shuja' Tawfiq, one of the defendants whose father was earlier deported by Israeli authorities, told the court that one of the interrogators climbed on a table and jumped on him while he stood handcuffed. Then the guard began kicking him in the stomach. According to Tawfiq, he suffered torn ligaments in his stomach which finally forced the interrogators to call in the prison doctor.

Seventeen-year-old Farid Damj showed the military court clear signs of torture on his wrists due to the tight handcuffs. He told the court that he confessed to whatever the interrogators wanted in order to relieve the physical pain. Tawfiq also gave the court the nicknames of three interrogators. He called them Marzouk, Abu Ghazal and Abu Dani. (Translation: Al Ittihad, October 22, 1984)

The Carrot and the Stick see Page 5

Court Rules Israeli Intelligence Knew Nothing About Terrorist Plans Before Arrest

The Israeli High Court dismissed October 21 claims by Jewish underground terrorists that Israeli intelligence had advance knowledge of the anti-Arab actions planned by the Jewish terrorists.

Judge Aharon Barak who dismissed the claims and refused to allow the release of secret materials gathered by the General Security Services (GSS) admitted that "the size of the security force deployed to uncover (anti-Arab) terrorism is not large." "They also have few resources," he wrote in his judgment.

With the High Court decision made, the trials in the Jerusalem district court continue. Legal experts feel that the High Court decision weakens the legal defence of the Jewish terrorists.

THIS WEEK'S CENSORSHIP

Following is a breakdown of censorship cuts for issue 234, October 26, 1984:

Number of original articles submitted to censors 11
Number of articles totally censored out 2
Number of articles partially censored but used 1
Number of articles passed 8

Palestinian Professionals Discuss Local Development

Five Palestinian professionals from the West Bank who participated in a conference entitled Middle East Peace and Development returned home October 21. The conference held at City University in New York was sponsored by a group of wealthy American Jews and Arabs as a means of studying necessary development projects and their need of funding.

The conference was organised by Steven Cohen, a professor involved in a number of Mideast Peace-related research projects.

Dr. Salah Bustami, head of the West Bank Doctors Union told *Al Fajr* that the five Palestinians did not make any deals or sign any agreements. "We told them that in the past 17 years, the West Bank industry, agriculture, health, economy and even the roads have not been developed."

Other participants include Nablus businessmen Ibrahim Abdel Hadi, surgeon Shawki Harb, professor Hisham Awartani, former Hebron municipality member Khalid Isseileh and economist Ibrahim Mattar.

According to Bustami the American group was genuinely concerned with the need to develop the occupied territories "and we are in dire need of that," he said. Bustami admitted that a major problem is that Israeli authorities have in the past blocked almost every attempt at developing Palestinian society. A leading Palestinian nationalist told *Al Fajr* that it was too early to judge the merits of the American businessmen's plans. "We have to study it from all angles before accepting or rejecting anything," he said.

Israeli papers reported the names of the businessmen behind the group and said that Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres met with their representatives while in New York last month. Hawkish Minister of Trade and Industry Ariel Sharon criticised Peres' general policy of allowing the "improvement of life in the occupied territories." In response to speakers who had objected to development by American investors, Peres told the Knesset October 23, "Why get excited over a group of 'do-gooders.'"

According to *The Jerusalem Post* the American businessmen include Lester Crown, chief executive of General Dynamics; Jay Pritzker, owner of Hyatt Hotels; Steve Shalom, New York banker; Henry Kaufman, Wall Street economist; and Robert Arnow, Robert Steinberg and Larry Tisch, all New York businessmen.

Prominent Jews in the group include Washington lawyer Al[illegible] Moses, former B'nai Brith official Arnold Foster, former World Jewish Congress president Philip Klutznick and Howard Squadron.

Prominent Arabs include former Pan Am president Najib Halabi, head of the American Enterprise Institute Bill Baroudy, and Zahi Khouri and Joe Jacobs, both businessmen.

Former US Secretary of State Cyrus Vance is also reportedly one of the prime movers behind the group. He is said to have been responsible for the meeting between Peres and Howard Squadron, the former president of the American Jewish Congress and Najib Halabi.

Washington correspondent for Israel Radio and *Ma'ariv* newspaper reported that Israel, Egypt and the US have secretly given their approval to the venture.

The Israeli papers also said that the group of businessmen have been meeting for over a year but were not encouraged by the then-Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir. Shamir was quoted as having told American Jewish businessmen that they should be ashamed for helping to improve the quality of life in the West Bank at a time when Israel was experiencing an economic crisis.

A delegation of the American businessmen is expected to arrive in the area within the next few weeks to discuss projects with Palestinian experts and Israeli officials.

AFTER A 13–YEAR SEARCH

Army Arrest Senior Fatah Military Officer

Israeli authorities revealed October 24 that Ali Khalil Reba'i, 38, was arrested September 4 in

Dura in the Hebron area. News of the arrest was suppressed because the Israeli army spokesperson believed Raba'i was the military coordinator for the Fatah wing of the Palestine Liberation Organisation.

The spokesperson said the Palestinian fighter had been eluding them for 13 years. A wide spread search operation using helicopters and an Arab-owned car was used to finally detain Reba'i in the Dura mountains. A number of Palestinians in the Hebron and Jerusalem areas were arrested in connection with Reba'i.

Israel Radio said that Reba'i is responsible for recuiting *fedayin* in the Hebron area and supplying them with weapons. He is also accused of having carried out a number of military operations against Israel.

Reba'i is said to have been a close associate of Bajes Abu Atwan, a legendary Fatah leader who was martyred by the Israeli army after years of search in the same area.

Dheisheh Resident Charged with Double Murder

A 23-year-old Palestinian resident of Dheisheh refugee camp was arrested October 22 and charged with possession of a stolen weapon and the murder of two Israelis.

The Council of Jewish Settlement in the West Bank and Gaza sent telegrammes October 23 to the Israeli defence minister, the prime minister and the military commander of the West Bank demanding the demolition of Dheisheh's first three rows of houses on the Jerusalem-Hebron road. In their extremist response, the council said an "anarchic atmosphere" in Dheisheh led to the murder. In the Knesset the incident was used to incite against Arabs and to call for the reinstatement of capital punishment for Palestinians charged with military action against Israel.

Some 50 Israeli soldiers broke into the camp October 22 and arrested camp resident Issa Jabrin Abed Rabbo. An Israeli-made machine gun was discovered in his possession; four bullets had been fired from the gun. After interrogation about the weapons and the missing bullets, Abed Rabbo confessed and led investigators to the Cremisan woods in Beit Jala where the bodies of two young Israelis — a man and a woman — were found. The Israelis had apparently been on a picnic in the area.

According to family and police reports, Abed Rabbo left Dheisheh several years ago for Jordan in order to find work. His family said he visited a mental hospital while in Jordan and was declared to have nervous tendencies. Abed Rabbo was also imprisoned in Jordan for five years on accusations of attempting to kill an Egyptian worker.

On June 8 he returned to the West Bank on a visitor permit. He found employment at the Mekorot Water Company in the Gush Etzion settlement block. Later he was employed as a night guard at the Technological Institute in West Jerusalem.

Two weeks ago Abed Rabbo told police that a weapon had been stolen from the Institute and he named two other camp residents as responsible. He was himself questioned and then released. Police questioned the two residents Abed Rabbo named and found both innocent. Police then sent a summons to Abed Rabbo at his work. When police had reason to believe that Abed Rabbo was responsible for the disappearance of the gun they came to the Institute to arrest him but could not find him. Instead they found a note in Arabic on the back of the summons sent to Abed Rabbo which read: "Thanks Israel — Fatah."

Police then went to Abed Rabbo's Dheisheh home but again were unable to locate him. They arrested his brother Nasri, 27, however and held him for eight hours. Upon releasing Nasri, police threatened him unless he made sure his brother showed up within 24 hours. Issa was not seen except shortly before the police came a third time to arrest him.

Two other West Bank residents, one a colleague of Abed Rabbo's and the other the colleague's friend, were also arrested on suspicion of accessory to murder. They were later released.

Family sources say that Issa is suffering from a nervous condition. He visited a local psychiatrist, Mustafa Mujahed, who confirmed that Abed Rabbo needed psychiatric help. In 1981 Issa's cousin Mohammed, 15, was killed by Israeli soldiers as he was walking on a Dheisheh street.

The Committee for Solidarity with Bir Zeit University, which has recently carried out a number of protest demonstrations in support of Dheisheh residents, issued a statement October 23 urging that no collective punishment be carried out against Dheisheh residents.

The committee's statement called on nature-loving Israelis not to travel in the occupied territories because it is not their land and is not Israeli territory. The statement added that the only way out of this cycle of bloodshed is by recognising the Palestinian people's right to establish an independent state next to Israel.

Mutilated Body Found

The body of a 45-year-old Dheisheh camp resident was discovered October 18 near the Jerusalem-Bethlehem Road. The skin had apparently been burned off in a chemical fire, leaving only the skeletal remains.

Subhi Ghattas, father of eight, left his home August 11 and never returned. He was employed at the Naser textile factory in Beit Sahour where workers say he had claimed he had employment in Jerusalem as well, but no one knew where.

The Israeli daily *Hadashot* said Ghattas threatened a number of times to commit suicide "and it seems that he has carried out his threat." Ghattas's wife, however, denied this saying that her husband had never had any emotional problems and never threatened to commit suicide. Police are investigating.

Lawyers Plan Union, Seek Jordanian OK

Seventy seven practicing West Bank lawyers met in Jerusalem October 19 to discuss plans for forming a local union. Lawyers hope the union will eventually receive recognition by the Jordanian Bar Association.

Under the sponsorship of the Arab Lawyers Committee, formed in 1980, the advocates met to decide whether or not to seek permission from Israeli authorities to form a union. In the meeting, held at the National Hotel in Jerusalem, 41 lawyers favoured forming a local union that might be recognised in the future by Jordanian authorities, 31 voted for forming an independent Palestinian body and five chose to abstain.

The West Bank branch of the Jordanian Bar Association, the only union of lawyers in Palestine during Jordanian rule, has been on strike since 1967 in protest of Israeli changes in existing laws. The West Bank has witnessed a gradual increase in the number of lawyers graduating from law schools in Arab countries who were given the choice between joining the strike or defending Palestinians tried in existing courts. Many of the striking lawyers have never practiced their profession but were absorbed instead into other occupations.

Striking lawyers were encouraged to maintain their boycott of the Israeli court system by a regular monthly salary paid them by Jordan. But authorities in Amman stopped registering any new Palestinian lawyers in 1976 and have not paid a salary to those newer lawyers striking since that date. "This negligence and careless stand (by Jordan) prompted lawyers to work seriously towards finding a solution to their situation," said Shukri Nashashibi, a member of the lawyers' committee.

In an interview with *Al Fajr*, Nashashibi, who supports the formation of a union, said, "We are not separatists. What we want is to improve the lawyer's situation by forming a union that would safeguard the profession and control matters of a legal nature relating to it." Nashashibi said the committee had already proved successful in tackling cases of land confiscation, land fraud and severe prison sentences. He cited the example of the Ni'ilin land fraud case in which the committee appointed seven lawyers to defend the villages against an Israeli real estate company in Israeli court.

Nabil Mushahwar, a Ramallah advocate, told *Al Fajr* that "It is not logical to work haphazardly without a union (or to not operate within Israeli courts) since Israeli lawyers have been working in West Bank courts since 1968." Mushahwar continued, "Our society which is the victim of occupation and settler harassment is so in need of committed Palestinian lawyers who will pursue cases of human rights violations."

Ali Ghuzlan, a Jerusalem advocate and spokesman for the committee, says that a union is urgently needed. "Look, all workers and professionals have already organised themselves in unions," he said, adding "It is our undeniable right to form such a union." Ghuzlan expects, however, that Israeli authorities will place a number of obstacles in the way of a Palestinian union.

Several delegations of Palestinian lawyers have been sent to Jordan seeking Amman's support for a local union but have been rejected. Attempts to form a union were also made in 1973 but failed. Local lawyers then formed the less binding lawyers committee in 1980 which never obtained Jordanian recognition.

New graduates from law schools who decide to work with the occupation court system must apply to the Israeli legal advisor in the Beit El compound. After coordination with the Israeli civil administration in the occupied territories, the legal advisor then decides whether to accept or reject the Palestinian lawyer's bid to practice.

Subsidies Cut, Prices Raised

In another of its desperate attempts to solve the current economic crisis and cut down on subsidies, the Peres government announced October 23 the raising of prices on some basic foods and fuel by 24 percent.

The price of frozen meat and poultry was originally raised as much as 90 percent, but reduced to 24 percent at the demand of MK David Levy, minister of housing. The price hike is designed, according to the treasury, to encourage the consumption of locally grown poulty and meat.

Frozen meat is not subsidised, so the recent price hike causes an increase in real terms of as much as 60 percent. The treasury says the price of chicken was raised as part of its policy to reduce the subsidy rate of one product at a time to a level of only 25 percent. This leaves only two such goods left, dairy products and eggs.

Fuel prices were raised, according to the energy ministry, to keep prices in line with the costs of importing and refining fuel.

Members of the Israeli labour union, the Histadrut, complained that the government had "betrayed a trust by raising prices when the country was on the brink of a price freeze," according to *The Jerusalem Post* October 24.

In statistics cited by the Histadrut this week, prices on some 2300 items in local stores were raised by 100 to 200 percent in the past two months. The inflation rate increased by only 40 percent, however. In recent price-check raids on local merchants, several merchants received large fines for raising prices following the implementation of the six-month ban on foreign imports.

Minister of Industry and Trade Ariel Sharon is scheduled to meet with US officials next week to discuss the free trade area between the two countries. This cut on subsidies is seen as part of the Israeli end of the trade deal.

London Conference Targets Racism Against Arabs

Over 500 people attended a conference in London exposing racism against Arabs October 14. The conference on Anti-Arab Racism was organised by the Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC) and sponsored by Britain's largest urban administration, the Greater London Council (GLC).

The GLC, in naming 1984 "Anti-Racist Year" has backed other projects and activities combating racism against different communities including the Caribbean, Indian, Turkish, Jewish, and Irish groupings.

After the GLC's agreement to sponsor a conference on racism against Arabs, the pro-Israel lobby in England threw its weight into trying to stop the conference from taking place.

The main purpose of the conference was to make people in Britain recognise the existence of racism against Arabs and take a stand against it. The PSC argued that it was impossible to do this without talking about the Palestine question. Although anti-Arab racism in Britain is rooted in its history of colonialism, said the PSC, since the foundation of Israel, Zionist propaganda has played upon that racism and reinforced it.

Both conference speakers, Pakistani Jalil Ahmed of the Pakistani Workers' Associaton and Egyptian Karim Alrawi, referred to the long history of racism against Arabs in Britian and the Arab struggle against it. Jalil Ahmed said a number of Arabs had been injured in racist attacks as far back as 1919, while Alrawi said that *The London Times* had once called Cardiff in Wales "Nigger Town" because of the number of Arabs living there. But Arabs in Britain, being a part of the dark-skinned British population, have been commonly referred to as black. Their struggle, then, has become part of the broader struggle against racism directed at all dark-skinned peoples.

Arabs are stereotyped today as "terrorists," "desert marauders" or "oil sheikhs." These images are constantly reinforced in the media. Alrawi cited the American movies *Ashanti* and *Sahara*, as ones in which Arabs were portrayed as savages. He also mentioned the film *Star Wars*, whose characters, the "sand people," are referred to in the book as "vicious desert bandits" and "barely human marauders." Alrawi said the recent increase in anti-Arab films and television programmes is due to Zionism, the new Cold War and what he called "anti-Islamic cultural racism."

A speaker from the Arab Women's Group in London said that when Arab women want to take part in British political organisations or women's groups they are asked to give their opinion of Jews. "We will not justify ourselves," she said. "We know that it was European Christian 'civilisation' which murdered six million Jews, not us... We decided that it was time to take our place in the black third world women's movement."

During a session in which attendants were free to speak, several Arabs told of their experiences in Britain, and complained of how little people in Britain seemed to know about the Arab peoples. One conference participant, a Mexican Jew, said his own understanding of Zionism's racist character had only come through a very painful process, during which Israel's support for Latin American dictatorships which many Jews oppose made him begin to question his own Zionist leanings.

There were workshops in the conference on the effect of stereotyping Arabs in London, the Palestinian community in London, Palestinian women, Israel's role in the third world, apartheid in Israel and the struggle against racism, anti-semitism and Zionism. Among those leading workshops were Rita Giacaman, a professor from Bir Zeit University, and Michel Warshavsky, a long standing Israeli opponent of Zionism.

The conference concluded with addresses on the legal status of Arabs in London and a talk by a former Palestinian prisoner, who told of torture and ill-treatment in Israeli prisons. Resolutions were adopted thanking the GLC for its support, supporting the establishment of a group to monitor anti-Arab racism in the media, and calling for the provision of a centre for Arabs living in London.

The PSC expressed pleasure at the success of the conference, which was the result of over three months' work. It was the first major public event in England at which the question of anti-Arab racism was confronted. Many who attended the conference said they had learned a lot about racism against Arabs and about Palestine.

Messages of solidarity to the conference came from Professor Edward Said of Columbia University in New York Israel Shahak, head of the Israeli Human Rights League, and Ken Livingstone, leader of the GLC. During the day, a collection was taken up with proceeds going to defray costs of the conference and to aid the National Union of Mineworkers, now in their 32nd week of national strike.

US PRESS ADVERTISEMENT

Arab Villages Stop Services, Protest Budget Deficits

Five local Arab village councils have been on strike since October 10 in a measure designed to force the authorities to act in conquering their combined deficit of IS one billion. The villages of Um al-Fahm, Jisr Zarqa, Kufr Yasif, Kaboul and Maghar — in addition to the Nazareth township municipality — are suffering from the financial crisis which encompasses a total of 25 Galilee and Triangle villages. The total deficit for these 25 is five billion shekels.

The authorities' failure to pay last month's salaries to municipal employees will eventually lead to the stoppage of all municipal services in these villages. According to Ibrahim Nimr Hussein, head of the local Arab village councils in the Galilee and Triangle, all the 45 Arab village councils will inevitably encounter this work and service stoppage if Israeli authorities refuse to end the crisis.

Sewage backup and uncollected garbage were seen in village streets as the five village council workers continued their strike. Israeli officials in the interior ministry have offered promises of payments to calm down strikes.

Hussein told *Al Fajr* that he was promised a meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres before the end of October. Hussein threatened that the Arab councils will act in a collective manner if the crisis is still pending at the end of this month.

Five hundred and eighty employees in Nazareth and Um al-Fahm who did not receive their September salaries sent Nazareth mayor Tawfiq Zayyad to a meeting with the interior ministry general director, Haim Kuperski. The strikers gave the authorities a deadline of October 24 for receiving their salaries, but still had not received payment.

Um al-Fahm workers demonstrate protesting their worsening economic situation. They still have not received their September salaries.

In his meeting with Tawfiq Zayyad, Kuperski, promised to study the possibility of offering assistance to Nazareth within two days. Kuperski also told Zayyad that he would study Nazareth municipality's needs.

Hussein said the village councils demand on end to deficits, the drawing up of new budgets similar to the budgets provided to the Jewish local councils and the establishment of budgets strictly for village developments.

Adib Abu Rahmoun, the deputy mayor of Nazareth, explained the reasons behind the deficits as part of the official policy of discrimination practised against the Nazareth municipality and Arab village councils. This year he refused a budget of IS1.5 billion. The interior ministry officials rejected the town's demand of IS3.5 billion.

Wajih Mashajneh, the deputy mayor of Um al-Fahm, told *Al Fajr* of the effects the strike is having on his village. "The maintenance crews are not working to fix broken water and sewer pipes," he said, adding that 890 students in the village have already lost 18 school days.

Kufr Yasif residents demonstrated October 20 in the village. The council's head Nimr Murqous and council members held a sit-in strike in the interior ministry offices October 21.

Ibilin Hosts Palestine Press Symposium

A week-long programme of exhibits, lectures and symposiums on Palestinian heritage sponsored by the Galilee village of Ibilin and the Ibilin National Club, ended October 20 with a symposium on the Palestinian press. The head of the Arab Journalists Association based in East Jerusalem was banned by authorities from attending the conference.

Akram Haniyeh, the head of the Arab Journalists Association and editor-in-chief of *Al Sha'ab* newspaper, was contacted by the deputy of the Ramallah military governor October 19 and ordered not to attend the Ibilin symposium.

Other members of the Palestinian press corps were not forbidden to attend, however. Participants in the Palestinian press symposium spoke on a range of subjects dealing with the Palestinian press from Turkish rule until the present. Nazareth journalist Afif Salem, editor of *Al Ada'ab* literary magazine, told the audience that in Palestinian affairs there are the oppressed and the petro-dollar rich. He said that his magazine publishes only for the oppressed population.

Salman Natour, editor of *Al Jadid*, the Haifa-based literary magazine, explained the role of Palestinian literary magazines and the role that *Al Jadid* plays in supporting Palestinian poets like Darwish, al-Qassem and Zayyad.

Michal Schwarz, an Israeli journalist with *Derech Ha'nitzotz* told the Ibilin audience that Israeli journalists don't give events in the occupied territories fair coverage.

"Although they are close geographically, the Israeli and Palestinian journalists are in two different worlds," Schwarz said. She added that "Israeli journalists not only accept censorship on Palestinians but also carry out self-censorship on what they write."

Researcher Issam Abassi, who has been working as journalist for over 40 years, gave a long but interesting review of the Palestinian press during the days of Turkish rule and the early British mandate. "Jerusalem, Haifa and Jaffa were the centres of Palestinian journalism back then" he said.

Atef Saed of the Jerusalem-based *Al Talia* weekly spoke of problems facing Palestinian journalists working under the difficult conditions of censorship restrictions. He also said that "The National Palestinian press foiled Israeli aims of showing how liberal their occupation is."

Al Fajr English journalist Daoud Kuttab talked about the role of the Palestinian press dealing with the foreign media. He criticised the Palestinian movement for not being able to deal with the international press in the past. "Because of rhetoric and exaggeration, the Palestinian movement failed to leave an effective impression on the press," in the past, he said. Kuttab said that the role of the English language Palestinian press is not only to write about local events and opinions but also to inform the international public of Palestinian culture.

In addition to the exhibit of Palestinian folklore, farming equipment and cultural photos, the Galilee village club also held symposiums on popular folklore and resistance literature with speakers from the Galilee and the West Bank.

The Dawn
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AL FAJR — Jerusalem Palestinian Weekly

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Swollen 'Carrot'

Since the July elections and the coming to power of Israeli Labour party headed by Shimon Peres, rumours have been planted among the Palestinian population of the occupied territories that their 'quality of life' will soon be improved, economically and socially. Many examples were given wide publicity: Israel approved the setting up of an *Arab* bank; a cement factory will be licensed; Najah University will be opened before the end of a four month military ordered closure; US money will be poured into the occupied territories to pump up the annexed economy.

The 'carrot' that Shimon Peres holds up to the eyes of Palestinians, Arabs and the West grows bigger every day, swollen by the hope that some of the concerned parties will be tempted to bite. However this view of the succulent 'carrot' — held from such a distance — does not reveal the many swords which have been hidden in it.

At the same time that so-called freedoms and good gestures-to-come are being exaggerated — such as attempting to appoint Arab mayors to replace those sacked two years ago and allowing a Palestinian delegation to travel to the US to discuss aid to the occupied territories — the Israeli government bans a prominent nationalist from travelling to the US, summons other nationalists and threatens them with severe measures for any political activity, renews town restriction orders on many others and reimposes strict military surveillance on the elected mayor of Nablus, Bassam Shaka'a.

It is possible that a few ignorant or naive Palestinians and a few opportunists might be the 'odd men out' and be tempted to grab the 'carrot' for themselves. They can only blame themselves when they find themselves stuck and dependent on their oppressor-benefactor. In difficult economic periods it is indeed a temptation to make political compromises for a short-term good. But the pleasure does not last — and the damage it creates in a national movement is wide-reaching and irreparable.

As to the Palestinian people, united behind their national movement, they will only consolidate their ranks and continue to support their sole legitimate representative, the PLO, in its demand of the right to return and to self-determination within a national independent state on their own soil.

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Generous US Public May Balk at 1985 Israel Aid

by Ghassan Bishara
Our Washington, DC Correspondent

The American people, generous as they have been to Israel in the past, will undoubtedly be dismayed once they know the extent of that generosity. From 1971 through next year's 1985 budget, Israel will have received US$30,140 billion from the US. Almost exactly half of this assistance from the US is in the form of grants or simply gifts not to be returned by Israel. This level of aid, by far the largest US foreign aid programme, has never been affected by Israeli military adventures in the Middle East, despite America's often verbal condemnation of Israel's use of force in the region.

With more than US$1 million a day spent on Israel's continued occupation of Lebanon and exorbitant expenditures on more settlements in the occupied territories, Israel's economy is suffering from a variety of economic ills. Rising unemployment, the continued drop in the value of the shekel, an annual inflation rate of 400 percent and a dangerously-low reserve of foreign currency all made the visit of Shimon Peres to the US this month all the more important. Precisely because the visit was very important it was taken at this time, only three weeks after Peres became prime minister and only four weeks away from the national American elections to be held on November 6. Israeli prime ministers have known for some time that the US is most giving to Israel before national elections. No American president who wants to get elected, even if he were so sure of re-election as Reagan is now, would reject a request by Israel's government.

> "At the current level of aid, Israel receives about US$9 billion a day from the US."

National elections mean that most members of the House of Representatives will be up for re-election along with at least one-third of the Senate, as well as state governors. Israel's leverage over the US government through the unqualified support it receives from most American Jews and many non-Jews assured Peres the same success that other Israeli prime ministers have scored before.

As the provider of aid to Israel, US experts believe, America can also use the aid as leverage to influence Israel's position in an acceptable solution in the region. The same experts, including present and former US government officials, agree that a clear Arab position with the US is absolutely necessary for the US to use its leverage with Israel. "Expecting present Arab leaders, especially those friendly with the US, to try to influence the US stand on this issue," said a former US ambassador to the Middle East, "is like expecting Menachem Begin to dismantle Judea and Samaria settlements, as he calls the West Bank." Referring to Peres' request for increased aid to his country from the US, an administration official is quoted by *The New York Times*, October 11, as saying that the US can help Israel, "but I think it is not a bad question to ask whether we should push the aid way up without Israel at least making a good-faith effort" to adhere to some American proposals for the region. Arab governments can help this American stand by getting themselves involved, said the former ambassador.

Exorbitant Levels of Aid

American aid to Israel is generally divided into two areas, economic and military aid. For fiscal year 1985, for example, Israel will receive US$1.2 billion in economic aid and US$1.4 billion in military aid. The one difference for next year is that all of the US$2.6 billion is in non-returnable funds, rather than as previously — about 55 percent in grants or non-returnables.

> "US aid of US$4 billion will be the equivalent of more than one-sixth of the Israeli GNP"

The US$2.6 billion will have granted more than US$1000 to every man, woman and child in Israel for fiscal year 1985. And, according to reports from Washington, DC, Israel wants much more. *The New York Times*, on October 11, wrote that Peres intends "to press next year to obtain a dramatic increase in American grants to Israel, from the current level of US$2.6 billion to more than US$4 billion a year."

While still in Washington it was reported that Peres would ask for an increase of up to US$4 billion in credit from the US to be available for use by Israel when they need it. The new reports after Peres' visit reveal that the US$4 billion will be in regular annual assistance and in the form of grants. The US$4 billion will, as usual, include economic aid of US$1.9 to US$2 billion and military aid of US$2 to US$2.2 billion. At the current level of aid, Israel receives about US$9 million a day from the US. When it increases to US$4 billion annually, the US will daily pay to Israel US$10 million. Considering that Israel's annual Gross National Product (GNP) is less than US$23 billion, US aid of US$4 billion will be the equivalent of more than one-sixth of the Israeli GNP.

The levels of US aid to Israel, without which Israel would be unable to maintain a standing army of about 180,000 troops, has been continuously on the increase. Israel's military establishment consumes about US$6 billion annually or about one-quarter of its GNP, according to the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency in its publication *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, 1984*. The US, in other words, contributes more than one-quarter of Israel's defence budget when it provides Israel with US$1.5 billion annually in military assistance. In order to finance these large military expenditures, the US share of the total Israeli budget has gone from US$13.1 million in 1967 to the US$4 billion requested for 1986. The great difference between the two sums is due, partly, to the 1973 war. Before the war, fiscal year 1972-73 US aid was US$467.3

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OPINION

AL FAJR invites our readers to contribute letters, articles and opinions. Contributions must be signed, but names may be withheld upon request.

A Fascist Call Against Palestinians in Israel

by Aaron Papu

The difference between a statesman and a political hack is that a statesman is ready to deal with real national problems in a decisive manner, but a hack, after elevating himself to a position of seniority by way of countless late-night party meetings, and the haggling and wrangling to which he and his cohorts are so accustomed, simply sweeps the problems under the rug rather than deal with them.

I would like to believe that Shimon Peres is a statesman and not a hack, and that he not only recognizes the existential problems facing Israel, but also has the will and ability to deal with them. Now that he has freed himself of the extreme left, (i.e. MAPAM, and Yossi Sarid and Shulamit Aloni [Citizen's Rights Movement]), he can turn his attention to Israel's number one internal problem: the hostile and dangerous brand of nationalism which is spreading through the Arab population. History has given Shimon Peres the task of turning his attention to extinguishing the flames that are burning in the hearts of Israeli Arabs; he must caution them agaist anti-Zionist and anti-Jewish incitement and once more secure their allegiance to the state of Israel — if not by their own volition, then by compulsion. Fear and respect can make for loyalty!

But let the facts speak for themselves. During a radio broadcast on Saturday September 22, the chairperson of the Lower Galilee Regional Council, Benny Garfinkel, said in regard to the Galilean Arabs: "Our settlements are being harassed day and night... Equipment and agricultural property are being pilfered, arson attempts on pastures and coppices have been carried out and attempted attacks on Israeli soldiers, crop damage, the uprooting of trees, vandalism, the destruction of water metres, and abusive nationalist grafitti have all become widespread... *(Davar* and *HaAretz*, 23. 9. 84)." Garfinkel went on to read a letter sent to the Regional Council, Kibbutz Beit Keshet, and the Jewish National Fund by youths from the village of Kufr Kanna, in which the authors unabashedly admit to setting fire to the coppice beside Kibbutz Beit Keshet for reasons of Arab nationalism...

Can incidents such as these fail to shock the prime minister? He is responsible for the country's internal and external security. Moreover, Peres is a disciple of David Ben Gurion, who throughout his life was a standard bearer of political and military activism. Of course, he saw to it that the Israeli Arabs maintained a minimum of loyalty, and during his reign, the Galilean Arabs flew an Israeli flag in their villages. But now, with the support of the leftists, Peace Now, and both the private and public press, many have turned away from the state, and some have not stopped short of endangering the security of Israel's soldiers and citizens.

Garfinkel did not mention two other issues which have not received the coverage they deserve in the past: namely, the existence of arms caches in Arab villages and the spree of illegal building activity taking place throughout the country. It thus seems clear that many Israeli Arabs are no longer loyal to the state of Israel. The time has come for the government to take the responsibility for solving this problem. Of course, it must be dealt with openly from a position of strength and in a forthright and aggressive manner. The conspiracy of silence must not continue.

The Israeli Arabs have been spoiled for the past 35 years. They haven't been inducted into the army; their standard of living and education has risen; their rate of natural increase is the highest in the world; many of them live in private homes, far from publically-owned apartment blocks; and they have been given the right to vote in the general elections in spite of the fact that they have not fulfilled their most basic civic duty — army service. And yet, rather than increase their feelings of loyalty to the state, they have done the opposite. If you want proof just look at their voting record for Rakah (the Israeli Communist Party) and other PLO supporters!

Last summer in Paris I heard the socialist minister of the interior discussing the matter of granting equal rights to French Arabs; he made it provisional on their total integration into French life. The time has come, Mr. prime minister, that you demand the same from the Israeli Arabs.

Public support for Rabbi Kahane has increased because of the governments' impotence in dealing with the fanatical nationalism of those Israeli Arabs who are putting their theories into practice (Begin was not an exception.) Whoever wants to weaken Kahane must first deal with the problem of Arab extremism. Kahane is only a symptom; the root of the problem lies in Arab fascism! (Translation: Hadashot, September 30, 1984.)

"Our settlements are being harassed day and night... Equipment and agricultural property are being pilfered, arson attempts on pastures and coppices have been carried out and attempted attacks on Israeli soldiers, crop damage, the uprooting of trees, vandalism, the destruction of water metres and abusive nationalist graffiti have all become widespread..."

NEWS ANALYSIS

US Veto Prelude to New Role in Lebanon

by Ghassan Bishara
Our Washington, DC Correspondent

The American government, according to an interview with a State Department official, tried to convince Lebanese authorities not to go to the UN Security Council with their complaint of Israeli treatment of south Lebanese civilians. The subsequent US veto of the Council resolution, its 39th veto with most of them concerning Israel and its practices as an occupying power, brought about the third bombing in 17 months of a US facility in Beirut.

The veto, which enraged many Arabs, particularly Lebanese, was seen by many as most unjustified. The Security Council resolution did not condemn Israel, nor did it call on it to withdraw immediately and unconditionally from Lebanon, which should have been done long ago. It merely asked Israel to "immediately lift all restrictions and obstacles" imposed on south Lebanese civilians. The US government according to the State Department official, who did not want his name used, tried to influence the Lebanese and Arabs not to present the resolution for a council veto. First, the Reagan administration, a month away from the national elections, November 6, did not want to do anything that might deny the president and his Republican party Jewish support. As of now, polls and studies show that more American Jews will vote Republican this time than in previous elections.

The administration, secondly, was contemplating an exploratory mission to the region before the bombing of the embassy; a vote either in favour or against the Security Council resolution would have, the official said, complicated the exploratory mission.

American officials also apparently were under the impression that though Lebanon's government knew that the UN resolution would not change Israel's stand in south Lebanon, they proceeded with it to show concern with Nabih Berri, head of the Amal militia, and his constituency in the south. The official, however, agreed that the resolution was a legitimate approach by Lebanese authorities. Although, US administration officials knew that a vote in the Security Council wouldn't change much of Israel's position in the south, even if passed, they decided to follow their normal route "when in doubt, come up on the side of Israel."

The exploratory mission, which was contemplated before but undertaken by Richard Murphy after the second bombing of the US embassy in Beirut in September was the result of messages from the region signaling willingness to compromise on the part of Israel and Syria. An American veto may have further complicated prospects for more serious discussions, he said. But, even before the veto, American officials were not anxious to get involved in the region again. The cancellation of the American-negotiated May 17th, 1983, agreement is still fresh in their minds, thus causing hesitancy and a wait for clearer signs from the two parties to compromise.

Those messages received by the administration following Murphy's return were not exactly what they were waiting for, however. Murphy, it was reported by the press and confirmed by the official, found "parties not yet close enough to each other" to warrant a direct American role, especially when past experiences are taken into account. Yet, the official said, the US "doesn't rule out a mediating role," but only when the parties' stands on the issues are closer.

The Syrian Position

Some elements in the Israeli government, the official said, recognise a certain advantage for Israel in a powerful Syria, but also feel threatened if that power goes beyond a certain point.

The advantage Israelis recognise in limited Syrian power, is that they, the Syrian authorities, will crush any force from Lebanon or Syria that will challenge their schemes. The obvious party in mind here is none other than the PLO. The closer Syrian troops are to the Israeli border, the theory goes, the more protected those borders will be from Palestinian penetration. This confirms Sharon's theory of pushing Palestinians in Lebanon eastward, whereby they will be controlled by Syria.

Although Amin Gemayel was reported to have said that the Syrian government assured him that no hostile

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Fertile Jordan Valley Thirsts for Pure Water Supply

Early winter rains will not go far enough to dispel farmers' fears of a dry season this year. *Al Fajr's* Daoud Kuttab looks at water problems in the Jordan Valley where Israeli restrictions on the water supply are forcing many farmers off their lands.

The early rains that have fallen in the region are welcomed by Palestinian farmers. After a dreadful farming season last year, hopes are now high that much of last year's losses can be compensated for.

Yet, problems still abound for the Palestinian farmer. Caught between a shortage of cultivable land due to the abundance of Israeli settlements and a shrinking market due to Israeli restrictions on produce entering its borders or leaving for the Arab world, farmers are also facing the ever-decreasing supply of water. A shortage of water is perhaps the most serious of obstacles facing farmers, particularly in the Jordan Valley, this season.

Aqueduct leading from the al-Ouja spring in the Jordan Valley to nearby Palestinian farms and villages. These water sources are now dry because deeper Israeli settlement wells have tapped the area's water resources, raising the salinity level and reducing crop variety.

Water

The question of the availability of water for Palestinian farmers is a much-publicised issue, with direct relation to the Israeli military occupation. Israeli authorities, through total control of the amount of water allowed to be pumped by Palestinian farmers, restrict the farmers to an inadequate water supply. New wells are rarely allowed to be dug, and even when permitted are dug no deeper than 120 metres.

Water control regulations are very stringent, according to agricultural engineer Azmi Ja'abari. In an interview with *Al Fajr*, Ja'abari said that the authorities survey farmers' lands to determine how much water they are allowed to pump. Water metres are then placed on their wells to make sure they abide by the regulation. Farmers who want to expand their farm are allowed no additional water. Furthermore, if certain wells don't pump the allotted amounts, farmers are not permitted to get water from another source. Their only alternative in such a situation is to buy tanked water, which is often so expensive it is not practical.

A number of natural springs have dried up since 1967. Palestinian farmers who used to draw water from the Ouja spring in the Jordan Valley blame Israeli settlement wells which are dug deep for the drying up of the Ouja spring. Israeli experts, however, say there is no relation between the spring drying up and the digging of additional deeper settlement wells.

One farmer, Ahmad Saideh from the Ouja area, had to move north to Jiftlik to take advantage of a greater water supply. The move not only means a much smaller strip of land to farm but also means greater expense since he has to travel more than 30 kilometres north of his home. It has also meant a 50-kilometre drive with produce to the Jericho central market.

Saline Water

Another problem is the high salinity level of water available to Palestinian farmers. Agricultural experts say that in recent years the water shortage crisis has partly subsided as a result of the increased use by Palestinian farmers of newly-developed drip irrigation methods. The problem, however, is that the quality of this water has deteriorated. The salty water now available to farmers restricts the type of agricultural product they can grow. Experts say that salty water forces farmers in the valley to primarily plant tomatoes and eggplants.

Israeli farm settlements in the Jordan Valley, on the other hand, have no problems either with the quality or quantity of their water. Swimming pools which overlook the dried-up Palestinian farms are perhaps the best example of this overabundance of water for the Jewish settlers. While Palestinian artesian wells are restricted to 90,000 cubic metres of water a year, the settlers are allowed an unlimited supply.

Most wells dug by settlers go down as far as 300-500 metres deep, compared to the maximum 120 metres allowed by the military for Palestinians. Israeli military authorities gladly kept the Jordanian pre-1967 limit on well digging and have applied it to Palestinians currently under their occupation.

By digging much deeper wells than the Palestinian farmers, the Israelis not only drain the water supplies used by Palestinians but also are able to get much cleaner water. Water further underground is filtered and has a much lower level of salinity.

Palestinian farmers say that the deeper wells not only give the Israelis better water but also increase the saltiness of the shallower Palestinian wells. Engineer Ja'abari told *Al Fajr* that the process of digging the deeper settler wells affects the structure of the earth underneath and loosens stones, which in time affects the shallower Palestinian wells.

Bad Season

Israeli restriction on the type of agricultural products planted by Palestinian farmers, also a direct result of their saline water supply, was among the main reasons for the bad farming season this past spring and summer. Last year's winter was very short so that Palestinian tomato farmers ran into market competition when Israeli products produced on the coastal line continued to be available much later than usual. Thus, when the Palestinian-produced tomatoes were available in February, farmers discovered that the market was already glutted and, as a result, were unable to get good prices. Most Palestinian farmers actually left their produce to rot on the vine, since picking and transportation costs were higher than what the sold tomatoes would have brought at market prices.

Another reason for the bad '83-'84 season can be blamed on geopolitical factors. The year before, in '82-'83, Palestinians enjoyed a bumper crop and open market. For the first time since occupation, south Lebanon was open for local produce to pass through Israeli agents. Farmers were also able to sell tomatoes in Jordan, Syria and north Lebanon, all through the Jordan River crossings.

All of this changed, however. The south Lebanon borders were closed by the Israelis. Jordan, under pressure from its own farmers, also closed the bridges. Syria's relations with Jordan were at a low level and so no tomatoes coming through Jordan to Syria were allowed. Iraq, under the pressure of debts incurred in its war with Iran, agreed to buy Palestinian produce on condition that it paid two years later. The condition, however, wasn't feasible for Palestinian farmers.

The Israeli market, to which Palestinians are not allowed to export except with a government permit, was open for only one week last year instead of the usual one month.

MO's 1015 and 1039

Israeli military officers in charge of agriculture have attempted to deal with this problem through military legislation. In 1983 Military Orders 1015 and 1039 were issued in order to control the quantity of cultivated land. The orders force all Palestinian farmers to obtain a permit before they are allowed to plant, thus placing the control of Palestinian agriculture directly in the hands of the Israeli military.

Azmi Ja'abari said that in a "normal situation regulating the areas to be planted and the type of plantation is a positive act, but in our situation the problem is different." Ja'abari said that without any help in the area of marketing, the Palestinian farmers face a situation of unfair competition. "The Jordan Valley, for example, was allowed only 9000 dunums to plant tomatoes last year," he said, "while the Israeli settlers have unlimited freedom to plant." He added that this year Israeli authorities have reduced the amount to be planted by 15 percent. So Palestinian farmers in the Jordan Valley will only be allowed to plant 7500 dunums with tomatoes.

Alternatives

The difficult situation of Palestinian farmers forces them to look for alternatives. While many farmers have given up farming and joined the labour force working in Israeli factories, others have insisted on finding greener pastures in other areas of the West Bank. The Jiftlik area, with its rich farming land, has become a target for many farmers. The availability of large supplies of water from the Fara'a springs has made it a natural attraction. Water is distributed to farmers through open channels for a limited number of hours, depending on the size of the land. But all is not

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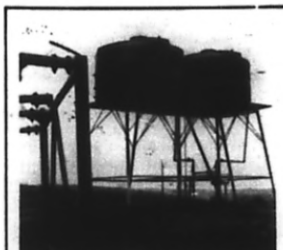
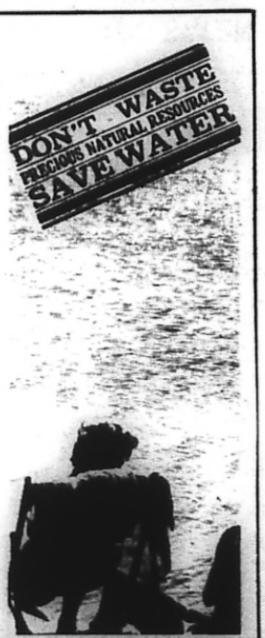




Above: water tanks supplying an Israeli settlement. Right: Israeli advertisement ironically cautioning against water over-use. *"Swimming pools which overlook the dried-up Palestinian farms are perhaps the best example of this overabundance of water for the Jewish settlers."*

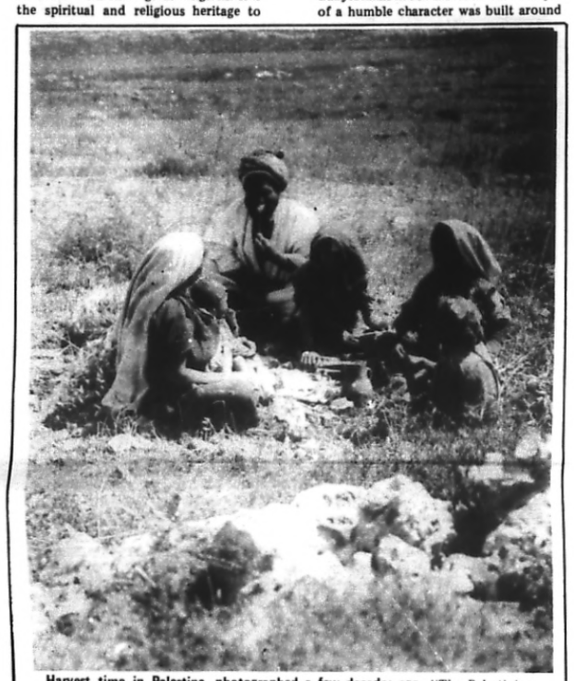
Jerusalem: Sacred to Many, Rightful Home to a Few

The question of Jerusalem — to whom it should belong — is the single most explosive issue for the world religious community embroiled in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Sacred to three major religions it is, however, increasingly becoming the stolen home of only one faith. Henry Cattan, in this first of a series of reprints from his study *The Question of Jerusalem* presented in Oslo last April, examines the religious significance of the city and answers the questions of who the Palestinians are and who the Israelis are.

Religious Significance Of Jerusalem

The problem of Jerusalem is one of the most emotional and explosive issues in the world. Unlike other issues of the Arab-Israeli conflict, its importance and dimensions transcend the Middle East and its peoples.

Jerusalem is unique among all the cities of the world because of its association with three great religions. It is the spiritual and religious heritage to



Harvest time in Palestine, photographed a few decades ago. *"The Palestinian Arabs are the original inhabitants of Palestine. The Muslim Arab conquest of Palestine in AD 637 was not the starting point of their occupation of the country. The Arabs are a pre-Islamic people."*

one half of humanity and is holy for 1000 million Christians, 700 million Moslems and 14 million Jews.

Jerusalem is the birthplace of Christianity. Almost all the holy places, sacred shrines and sanctuaries connected with the birth, life and death of Christ are found in Jerusalem and in nearby Bethlehem: the Holy Sepulchre, the Via Dolorosa, the Church of the Nativity, the Cenacle (the Upper Room) the Garden of Gethsemane, the Mount of Olives and 38 churches.

Jerusalem is also holy for Islam: "All Islamic traditions and sacred writings point to the unmistakable fact that Jerusalem is holy for all Moslems, second only in holiness to Mecca and Medina. It is the *qibla* (direction of prayer) and the third of the sacred cities." The name of Jerusalem in Arabic is *Al Quds* which means "The Holy."

On the site of the *Haram al-Sharif* in the Old City of Jerusalem stand two famous Islamic sanctuaries: the Mosque of the Dome of the Rock which was built in the seventh century, and the Mosque of al-Aqsa, meaning "the farthest," which was built in the eighth century on the place associated by Islamic tradition with "the farthest Mosque" mentioned in the Quran.

In addition to these two historic mosques, there exist 34 other mosques in Jerusalem, 27 of which are located in the Old City and the others outside the walls.

To Judaism, Jerusalem has been a holy city since the building of the Temple of Solomon. This Temple, completed in 962 BC, was destroyed by the Babylonians in 587 BC. A second Temple of a humble character was built around 515 BC after the return of the Jews from captivity but was again destroyed by the Macedonians in 170 BC. It was reconstructed in Herod's time only to be destroyed for a third time by the Romans following the Jewish insurrection in AD 70. Today the most important Jewish sanctuary in Jerusalem is the Wailing Wall which the Jews consider to be the remnant of the western wall of Herod's Temple.

The significance of Jerusalem, however, does not lie merely in the holy places and sanctuaries of the three great religions. In addition all three have a vital interest in preserving the living presence of the adherents to their faith in the Holy City.

Jerusalem has been the scene of many dramatic events and the cause of many wars during the 38 centuries of its known existence. It has suffered more than 20 sieges, changed hands more than 25 times, was destroyed 17 times and its inhabitants were massacred on several occasions. The last act in the drama of Jerusalem occurred in our lifetime. Under the pretext that the city was the capital of a Jewish Kingdom in biblical times about 30 centuries ago, Zionist Jews, who had come to Palestine as immigrants during the British mandate, established in 1948 the State of Israel, seized and usurped Jerusalem and displaced and dispossessed most of its original inhabitants.

Israel's usurpation of Jerusalem has created an explosive conflict of world importance which has engaged the attention of the UN for more than three decades and was the subject of scores of decisions and resolutions of the international organisation which have remained without implementation.

In order to understand the *Question of Jerusalem*, it is necessary to cast aside much misinformation and deceptive propaganda about who the Palestinians are and who the Israelis are.

Who Are The Palestinians?

The Palestinians are the descendants of the Canaanites and the Philistines who lived in Palestine in earliest times.

The Canaanites are the earliest known inhabitants of Palestine and are thought to have settled in this country at about 3000 BC. They lived in cities as a settled population and possessed an economy based upon agriculture and commerce. Each city was ruled by a king who also performed the functions of a high priest. Not much is known about the religion of the Canaanites. In a country divided into a number of small states, it is doubtful that they possessed a unified religion, like Egypt or Mesopotamia, and each city possessed its favourite gods, its rituals and its sacred legends.

It was the Canaanites who ruled Jerusalem until the eve of the first millennium BC when it was captured by the Israelites. It was the Canaanites who gave to Palestine its early name, for the Bible refers to it as "the land of Canaan" or "the country of the Canaanites."

It was the Philistines, however, who gave the country its present name of Palestine. The Philistines, who were called "The People of the Sea," are thought to have come from Illyria to the land of Canaan about 1175 BC and occupied its southern coast and the maritime plain to a point north of Japho (Jaffa).

There exists a misconception in the mind of some people that the Palestinians first came to Palestine as invaders during the Moslem Arab invasion of Palestine in the seventh century. This is not historically correct. The Palestine Arabs are the original inhabitants of Palestine. The Moslem Arab conquest of Palestine in AD 637 was not the starting point of their occupation of the country. The Arabs are a pre-Islamic people. They lived in Palestine and other parts of the Middle East before the advent of Islam. In fact, the number of the invaders at the time of the Moslem Arab conquest of Palestine was small and they were assimilated by the indigenous inhabitants.

Professor Maxime Rodinson, in his book *Israel and the Arabs*, points out that "the Arab population of Palestine was native in all the senses of that word" and were Arabised as a result of the Arab conquest in the seventh century. The Palestinians have lived continuously and without interruption in their country since the dawn of history. Their settlement in Palestine can be traced back to at least 40 centuries. There were small infusions of other racial elements into the Palestinian stock, mainly from the Greeks, the Romans, the Moslem Arabs and the Crusaders. But this Palestinian stock, which comprises both Moslems and Christians, continued to constitute the main element of the population until the majority of the original inhabitants were displaced by the Israelis in 1948.

The misconception that the Palestinians first came to Palestine as Moslem invaders in the seventh century can be ascribed to the fact that today in their majority they embrace the Islamic faith. This, of course, is a superficial conclusion which ignores the changes in religion of the inhabitants of Palestine. Originally pagan, some embraced Judaism at the time that the Israelites cohabited with the Canaanites; others, like some Jews, became Christians upon the advent of Christianity; and finally some became Moslems following the Moslem Arab invasion. Sometimes a change of religion occurred to avoid taxation. Thus, King Solomon levied a tribute from non-Jews and the Moslem rulers imposed the *Jiziah*, a tax on non-Moslems.

"The Palestinians have lived continuously and without interruption in their country since the dawn of history. Their settlement in Palestine can be traced back to at least 40 centuries. There were small infusions of other racial elements into the Palestinian stock, mainly from the Greeks, the Romans, the Muslim Arabs and the Crusaders. But this Palestinian stock, which comprises both Muslims and Christians, continued to constitute the main element of the population until the majority of the original inhabitants were displaced by the Israelis in 1948."

Who Are The Israelis?

In answering the question, *who are the Israelis*, it is necessary to go into greater detail because of the political exploitation which was made by the Zionists of the Jewish presence in Palestine during biblical times. To achieve their purpose, the Zionists did not hesitate to make false claims and to distort history.

According to the Bible, the Israelites left Egypt and wandered in the desert for a number of years. Around 1200 BC, or maybe earlier, they penetrated into 'the land of Canaan" and found a settled population and an established culture.

The Bible goes on to describe Joshua's capture of Jericho and how its walls fell when the priests blew the trumpets. However, it should not be forgotten that the Bible is a mixture of history, legend, and Hebrew mythology written by the Jews themselves. Apart from the improbability that the walls of a besieged city would fall at the sound of trumpets, modern historians and archaeologists have established that the account of Joshua's capture and destruction of Jericho, as given in the Bible, is pure legend, because the city had been destroyed long before the arrival of the Israelites in Palestine. K.M. Kenyon has concluded from her archaeological research, published in *Digging Up Jericho*, that it is impossible to link the destruction of Jericho with the entry of the Israelites into the land of Canaan at the end of the 13th century. The Israelites could not have captured Jericho at this time, because it was not inhabited: it had been destroyed around 1550 BC.

Similarly, modern historians reject the theory of a general invasion of the land of Canaan by the Israelites, but lean towards the view that they infiltrated over a period of years by crossing the River Jordan at different points. It seems that their penetration was peaceful on the whole and constituted a slow process that lasted about 200 years. This disposes of the story of a general massacre of the Canaanites by the Hebrews, or of a brutal substitution of one population for another. Some passages of the Bible suggest that the Canaanites were savagely exterminated. Other passages give a different version.

Thus the Bible says: "And the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites: and they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods."

Colonel Watson observes, in his book *The Story of Jerusalem:* "It is clear, however, from the account both in the Bible and in Josephus, that, although Joshua had distributed the whole of the land among his followers, many of the former inhabitants were left in possession of their towns and territories; and in some respects it was the latter who assimilated the Israelites, rather than the Israelites who subdued the inhabitants..."

It seems that, on the whole, the Israelites and the Canaanites cohabited, and even merged together. Professor Adolphe Lods states in his French work *Israel, Des Origines Au Milieu due VIIe Siecle* "The people of Israel at the royal period were a mixture of Hebrews and Canaanites... In this amalgamation, the Canaanite element was by far the most numerous... being more civilized, the Canaanites naturally compelled the newcomers to adopt their culture, and in this sense one can say that the Canaanites conquered their victors. But, on the other hand, the Hebrews possessed and preserved the consciousness of conquerors; they succeeded in imposing their social framework, their name, their God, on the entire population of Palestine."

Professor Martin Noth, quoted in Watson's book, observes that the Israelites did not make room for themselves by conquest or by destruction of the Canaanite cities. They settled, in general, in unoccupied regions and did not displace the original inhabitants. For a long time after their invasion of the land of Canaan, the Israelites possessed neither a kingdom nor a central government. They lived as tribes and were ruled by the Judges. It was only in or around the year 1000 BC that David established the first Jewish kingdom in Palestine.

After taking Jerusalem, "David dwelt in the fort and called it the city of David" according to the Bible. According to the classical custom of the time, a captured town was given the name of its conqueror. The Bible, however, contains a reminder to the city's new occupiers of its non-Jewish origin: "And say, thus saith the Lord God unto Jerusalem: Thy birth and Thy nativity is of the land of Canaan; Thy father was an Amorite, and Thy mother an Hittite."

It is appropriate to mention one fact concerning David's capture of Jerusalem which stands in contrast to what happened 30 centuries later. He did not displace and dispossess its original inhabitants: the Jebusites, a Canaanite subgroup, were allowed to remain in their city, but not in the fortress, he (David) permitted them to settle in the east of the town, on Mount Moriah.

The continued existence of non-Israelites in the new Jewish kingdom is further confirmed by the Bible which refers to the people whom the children of Israel were not able to destroy and upon whom Solomon levied a tribute of bondservice in the book of I Kings.

David ruled Jerusalem for 33 years, and after his death his son Solomon ruled it for 40 years. During Solomon's reign peace prevailed and he ordered the construction at Jerusalem of the Temple with which his name has been associated.

Shortly after Solomon's death, the Israeli [Israelite/ed.] Tribes revolted and the unified kingdom established by David was split into the kingdom of Israel in the north which was formed by 10 of the Twelve Tribes, and the Kingdom of Judah in the south, with Jerusalem as its capital, which was formed by the Tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

The unified kingdom established by David had lasted 73 years. The dream of a unified Jewish kingdom in Palestine was thus shattered and the two new Jewish kingdoms were almost continually engaged in war between themselves or with neighbouring peoples. The Kingdom of Israel, however, did not survive long because in 733 BC the Assyrians overran its territories and in 721 BC it completely ceased to exist.

As to the "pseudo-autonomous" Kingdom of Judah, as called by Kenyon, it survived for a while but led a precarious existence. Its capital Jerusalem was periodically besieged, taken and sacked by the Philistines, the Arabs, the Syrians, the Babylonians and the Egyptians, and for long periods of time it paid tribute to Egypt and Babylon. In 587 BC the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar attacked and destroyed Jerusalem, burned the Temple and carried its inhabitants into captivity at Babylon where they were absorbed into their new surroundings. This represented the end of the Kindgom of Judah.

Did Jerusalem Remain Jewish?

After its capture by the Babylonians and except for the period of the revolt by the Maccabees, Jerusalem was ruled for the following nine centuries by pagans. It was ruled first by Babylon from 587 to 538 BC when it was captured by Cyrus, King of Persia, who issued his famous edict allowing the Jews who had been deported to Babylon to return to Palestine and to rebuild the Temple. Only a small number, however, returned as the majority chose to remain in Babylon where they had settled down.

Jerusalem remained in the hands of the Persians during the two following centuries until it was wrested from them in 332 BC by Alexander the Great. The Greeks held Jerusalem for a century and a half but in 167 BC the Maccabees revolted against their Greek rulers because they had prohibited the Jewish faith and converted the Jewish Temple to a temple for Jupiter. Although the Maccabees succeeded in liberating a part of Jerusalem, the Greek garrison continued to hold the citadel until 141 BC when Simon Maccabeus finally reduced the Greek garrison.

Maccabean independence, however, did not last because in 134 BC Jerusalem was besieged by Antiochus Sidetes, King of Syria, and the siege was raised only upon the payment of a tribute. Seventy years later in 63 BC Pompey captured Jerusalem for Rome and put and end to Jewish rule in the city.

In 40 BC the Romans set up Herod, who was an Idumaean and had helped the Romans, as a vassal king and Palestine became the Roman province of Judea. Herod reconstructed the Temple in a more sumptuous manner than had been done in 515 BC. On his death in 4 BC he was succeeded by his son who was deposed by the Romans two years later and Jerusalem was then governed by a Roman procurator.

The Jews revolted twice against the Romans, first in AD 66-70 and again in AD 132-5(Bar-Kochba revolt). Following the first revolt, Titus destroyed the city and the Temple. After its destruction in AD 70, Jerusalem "never again revived as a Jewish city" writes Albert Hyamson in his book *Palestine Old and New*.

After the second revolt, the Jews were either killed or sold into slavery and dispersed to the far corners of the Roman Empire. When Jerusalem was rebuilt after AD 135 by the Roman Emperor Hadrian, it was given the name of Aelia Capitolina and a decree was issued which prohibited under penalty of death the presence of Jews in the city. The prohibition of the presence of Jews in Jerusalem was lifted after the Moslem Arab conquest. As from Hadrian's time until the reign of Constatine in the fourth century, the population of Jerusalem consisted only of Christians and pagans, the latter worshipping Roman deities and idols. As from the reign of Constatine no pagans were left in Jerusalem.

For 18 centuries following Rome's deportation of the Jews, no Jews or very few Jews lived in Jerusalem. Except for a short period during the reign of Julian the Apostate, the prohibition of the presence of Jews in Jerusalem decreed by Hadrian and renewed by Constantine in 325 and by Heraclius in 628 lasted for several centuries until it was relaxed by the Arabs after their capture of the city. But despite the abrogation of the prohibition, very few Jews lived in Jerusalem. M. Franco, who made a special study of the situation of the Jews in the Ottoman Empire published in French in *Histoise dos Israelites de l'Empire Ottoman*, mentions that the famous Spanish traveller Benjamin of Tudela found 200 Jews in Jerusalem in the year 1173. In 1180 another traveller, Petahia of Ratisbon, found in Jerusalem one coreligionist only. In 1267 a Spanish rabbi, Moise Ben Nahman, found two Jews in the city.

In consequence of the persecution of the Jews in Western Europe and their expulsion from Spain (1492) and Portugal (1496), some of them sought refuge in Palestine and in other Mediterranean countries. As a result, some Jews came to live in Jerusalem. According to A.S. Rappoport's *History of Palestine*, there were 70 Jewish families in Jerusalem in 1488, 200 families in 1495 and 1,500 families in 1521.

In the 19th century, the Jewish population of Jerusalem began to increase. According to the Rev. Edward Robinson, Professor of Biblical Litera-

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A Jewish picket in 1934 outside Rapaport orange grove in Kfar Saba, in the Histradrut campaign for the exclusive employment of Jews in establishments owned by Jews. The placard reads: 'Don't dispossess the Jewish worker.' *"Most of the Jews in Palestine have no connection with this country. The Jews of Palestinian origin constitute an insignificant minority."*

"The Jews who, under the Zionist impulse, immigrated to Palestine from Europe during the 20th century and who seized in our time Palestine and established the state of Israel are not the descendants of the Israelites who were deported by Babylon or Rome and possess no racial links with the Biblical Israelites.'

Ein Sinya: Proud of Past, Wary of Future

Many Palestinian villages have reason to be proud of their history in the people's long struggle against foreign occupation. Ein Sinya is one of these villages. *Al Fajr's* Baher Ashhab looks at this tiny village, its past and present, and records resident's dreams of the future.

Ein Sinya's past: Roman ruins in the village/BA photo

Not far from Jalazon refugee camp and Bir Zeit town lies the tiny locale of Ein Sinya. Sliced in two by the busy Ramallah-Nablus highway the quiet village stands as metaphorical proof of survival despite the contradictions of old and new, past and future, occupation and freedom.

In 1948, when the population of Ein Sinya stood at a mere 330, the small village was nevertheless an important base for Palestinian resistance forces. It was one of several refuges of the legendary Palestinian leader Abd al-Khader al-Husseini and his revolutionary comrades, as well as a major ammunition cache. Husseini was killed in the spring of '48 defending Qastal one of the last Palestinian strongholds before Jerusalem just prior to the establishment of the Israeli state.

The residents of Ein Sinya speak with pride about their ties to the Husseini family and the Palestinian resistance. As is the case with all villages under occupation, resistance has become a way of life. They also speak of Ein Sinya's major role in the 1936 general strike directed against the colonising British forces and the unrestrained influx of Jewish settlers into Palestine.

Ein Sinya residents remember perhaps with the most sadness the 1948 war and the influx of refugees which shattered the peaceful nature of the small community. Immediately after the establishment of the Israeli state and following the massacres of whole Palestinian villages and communities, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians fled across the "Green Line" to the West Bank and neighbouring Arab countries. Five thousand fleeing Palestinians found refuge in Ein Sinya. The sudden influx of refugees presented Ein Sinya with an inextricable problem, however. The village's 30 to 40 homes could not accomodate but a small number of the homeless. The remaining thousands camped in Ein Sinya farm lands and among its olive groves. One resident described the scene: "All of a sudden thousands of our Palestinian brothers and sisters came flooding in upon our village. We were overwhelmed by their large number and sad condition. They were mainly elders, women and children with only basic necessities, needing shelter and food. The women and children were crying and calling out for their missing husbands and fathers. It resembled the aftermath of a devastating earthquake."

The present: a soccer game in the village's streets/BA photo

Another resident said sadly, "We hoplessly wished for their return to their homes and properties, not only for the sake of preserving our farm lands and olive groves but because we felt disheartened to see thousands of homeless women and children out in the cold. We just stood there watching them helplessly."

The refugee problem facing Ein Sinya was only slightly solved when the refugees were dispersed to a nearby "temporary" camp called Jalazon. This camp, though originally intended to be temporary housing, has become the all-too-permanent home for thousands of Palestinians living in primitive, horrendous conditions.

Despite an increase in the Palestinian birth rate and the 36 years since 1948, the population of Ein Sinya has only increased by 100 persons. It now stands at 400 plus. The reason behind this low population figure, Ein Sinya residents claim, is that hundreds of the village's original residents have chosen to live abroad rather than eek out a meagre existence on shrinking farm lands amidst an expanding occupation. Residents claim their fellow villagers refused to tolerate the nation's colonisation by Turkey, Britain, Jordan and most recently Israel. Therefore about 1000 of Ein Sinya's residents live and work abroad in four principal countries: the USA, Canada, Jordan and Kuwait. They range from labourers, teachers, and engineers to businessmen and contractors. Part of the money they earn is sent home to support their families and to be used in improving the village's welfare. Without their support, one resident claimed, Ein Sinya could not survive.

Several residents have come back from abroad and resettled in Ein Sinya. Among them is the village *mukhtar*, Abu Ata, and his uncle. They spent together a total of 38 years in the US where they owned and operated a grocery store in Chicago. The *mukhtar's* uncle has retired in Ein Sinya and now lives in a comfortable home overlooking the village and its olive fields. The *mukhtar* opened a small grocery store in the village but says he is losing money. He complained of the crippling economic conditions in the village and said, "Due to the devaluation of the Israeli shekel and the 400 percent inflation, I often have to sell a product for less than I bought it for. Current conditions push me to leave Ein Sinya and go back to Chicago where I made a good living, but I will not."

Although the current population of Ein Sinya consists largely of elderly men and women who pass the time working the land and watching their favorite Arabic programmes, there are a number of young residents who commute back and forth to nearby cities to study or work. About 30 residents have jobs in Ramallah and Jerusalem. Ten young men attend school in Ramallah, since the only school in the village can only accommodate students up to grade six.

The villagers joined hands a few years ago and built two small cooperative factories in the village. One is an olive press and the other for olive oil canning. They press olive produce for Ein Sinya and neighbouring villages and hope to export olive oil to international markets. The profit earned will help the village maintain essential services in the village such as the paving of roads.

The village was recently able to have running water and electricity, obtained through funds from the Joint Jordanian-Palestinian Committee in Amman. When asked if the village obtains financial support from Israeli authorities, the *mukhtar* said it does not. "They (Israeli authorities) put so many conditions on us whenever we request aid," he said. "They are often unrealistic, so we quit asking."

The elders in Ein Sinya dress today in the most traditional Palestinian village costumes: the women in spectacular hand-sewn gowns decorated with multi-coloured threads; the men in one-piece grey robes and black and white *kafiyyas*.

The youngsters, however, wear the latest in Western styles: blue jeans and "Mr T" muscle shirts. In more than just dress they are caught between a proud past and a somewhat strange and uncertain future. One ten-year-old helping his grandfather carry the olive harvest home on the family donkey spoke of the day when he may choose to "go to America" and help his father manage a gas station in east Chicago. But, if "we get our Palestine back," he says, there would be no need to go. His immediate plans, however, were to run off to an exciting soccer game with the neighbourhood kids. For Palestinian children, as other children worldwide, often must exercise their unique gift for ignoring present painful realities in order to have a bit of fun. The future of Ein Sinya and of Palestine will depend, however, on their ability in the future to stand up to those painful truths and forge from them a stronger, free nation.

The future: *He may go to America to help his father manage a gas station in east Chicago but if "we get our Palestine back" there would be no need to go.*

The Tragedy of Amazing Houdini

by Samih al-Qassem

I will begin to tell my story of
horror from my birth, from the
cutting of my cord.
There a mine obstructed the way
for my waist.
Though I have never learned the
art of fighting,
I rarely fought my own grief.
The events preceded me, my bosom
friends denied me;
And I realised I was playing a
losing game.

I will begin to tell the story of
magic, from my corpse.
It is time to tackle my weakness
a bit,
And light a fire on my mountain.
It is time to reconcile the opposites,
the prison cells and the magic rose.

Mecca is not mine,
Nor **Jilqa*** *is my* **Qibla.****
Neither my mare is Cairo.

I will begin to tell my story from
before the beginning, because
my end and my beginning are
the same.
I will begin to tell my story from
a cry in the soil,
From the palm branches tossed by
storms,
Beyond the mirage, mirage, mirage...

I will begin to tell my story from the
thin girl tumbled on the threshold,
Black and blue, she lies wrapped in
a tight little ball,
A stone in the palm of her hand,
Bloodstains on her neck,
Blood on her blood,
A burning butterfly in her chest.
Tumbled on the threshold, from
time immemorial,
She tumbled on the threshold
without countrymen and a
homeland;
And yet raped and disarmed in
the name of God.
The door with no key,
The night with no lantern.

O you who make us ashamed,
You generously make my life longer.
Be ashamed
Are you not ashamed of your magic?
O you who publicly murder me,
Do you resurrect me secretly
To make of me Houdini?
To master the art of escape from
predicaments,
What kind of task is this?

"Ladies and gentlemen, members of the diplomatic corps and press media. For sure you would find Houdini an amazing man with his amazing magical games. He is an extraordinary creature who masters the art of running away incredibly from trouble. But he told me to relay his extreme resentment of having to repeat this murderous, silly game. I would like to finally inform you of the secret of his dreadful grief."

Now I understand
There is no way to stop running.
The branches and bark of Satan's
forests surround me, I smell it
and I run.
But where can I go?
There are no landmarks to direct my
way
There is no way to return.

Praise the Lord who established
the prophet's night journey to
heaven, in the face of great
*distance.****

What, is this another predicament?
A crisis following another crisis,
Praise He who...
I am alone...
*There is no gain from the utterance,*****
*There is no solace save in God...******

Shall I laugh?
This is my crisis.
Shall I cry?
Does laughter tunnel a way underground?
Do tears lead to the answer?

Praise He who made more chains
and decreased the number of
captives, who made strong
towers bow.

It is a huge crisis, to enter or
to exit?
O now I understand
The whale's belly, Jonah, the
secrets of death and life.

O, Aha, nothing remains, no more
no less, except marks on a
corpse.
OK, I know and I don't know.
There is a path — there is no path!
The cities part the camp and its
debris.

"Pardon me, are you concerned about
what is happening?"
She shrugs her shoulders, "God knows."
Cities that stretch the night upon
the whisky table,
And weep as I do,
And laugh as I weep,
And are angered, then feel sorry.
"Pardon me, are you concerned about
what is happening?"
She returns to her dream, "God
knows."

"O house of fleas!"
I insult her and I strike.
How can I strike?
My corpse is my bow and my
handgrenade,
I call upon her.
Grant me a moment of grief that
is born like my death,
Notches on my neck, wrist, arm,
and vocal cords.

O, Aha, now I understand that
it travels back and forth
between my heart and my lips.

A lock and chain on top a lock
and chain,
And a box of steel in which I am
locked.
In awhile I will be tossed in
the sea or the desert,
Surrounded by a frightened, blinded
audience,
Cheered by crowds — no crowds.
Noise, music, banners, decorations.
Can you see the tears on my
eyelashes?

(O curse of the herds)
I curse you and I drown
Where shall I drown?
How shall I drown?
There is no escape from descent,
There is no escape from ascent...

The Jewish child Handric, son of Rabbi Samuel Weis, was born in March 1874 and later known as Harry Houdini. He is the miracle worker in escaping deadly peril — manacles, detention camps, gas ovens, vagabondage, and massacres. His mother hid a piece of cake in a cupboard locked fast. When she returned home, she discovered that he had eaten the cake while the cupboard was still locked.

The Palestinian child Samih, son of Mohammed al-Qassem Hussein, was born in May 1939 and later known as poet Samih al-Qassem. He is the miracle worker in escaping deadly peril — manacles, detention camps, gas ovens, vagabondage, and massacres. The United Nations hid his homeland in a cell locked fast. When she returned home, she discovered that he had withdrawn his corpse while the cell was still locked.

What is this noise?
All that happened is that my tear
bored a hole in my unripe apple.
I made it a home.

Barricade your streets
Breathe deeply
You, his loners, won't find him
among you.
And breathe deeply.
For you, his enemies, won't find
him with you.
He is Houdini, who gets drunk in
the face of death,
He is the Palestinian Houdini,
A king with no troops.

The wine glass, the knife, the rose.
The cold and solitude are Houdini's
court jesters.
Where did this tear come from?
From his eyelid, or
From you, O candle?
He walks on water at night,
naked.
How many waves cried: who was
he? who was he?
How many waves disclosed the
secret: I saw my reflection
walking on the water at night,
naked.

Cover him with a pomegranate
blossom, if he died among
the wheat in the valley.
Cover him with clouds, if he
died on the dunes of the Naqab.
Cover him with a banner, if he
*died on Jormuq's***** *grass.*
Cover him with sun, if he died
in Jerusalem.
Leave him naked to frighten
and remind you, if he died in
exile.

For the second time, the poet — magician — entered the cell naked and handcuffed. The stunned masses watch him fearlessly. He approached them and, with a masterful gesture, nodded to the crowd. The masses, waiting impatiently for the splendid game of death, applaud him. He confidently looked through the crowd, his eyes penetrating the masses like bullets. His eyes are able to conquer miracles. And no one noticed the curtain of transparent tears which fell with unique cruelty on the repeated scene.

My forehead is the end of the
universe.
Stargaze into your inner souls and
you will find me.
I spoke to the desert and the sun,
to Fustat and to Jerusalem.
O, I spoke so much that my mouth
has become like steel, like the
lily.
My songs are for the fire, and
my elegies are for the light.
My magic and insanity are for
wisdom.
The dead gargle my blood among the
shrines.
The door squeaks at night
And the wind whistles through the
skull.
And you escape from massacre
within massacre.

So come and see me
Come and see my magic and wonder,
Come unlock my handcuffs.
A slight touch and your riddles
will collapse.

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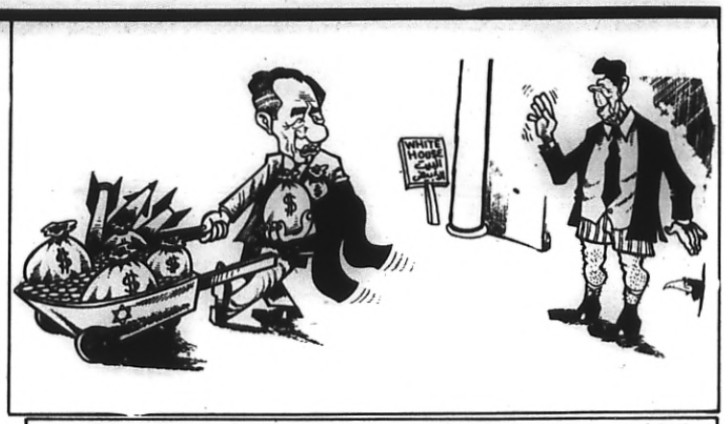
WINDOW ON THE ARAB PRESS



The Palestinian press this week concentrated on the latest itinerary of PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir Arafat, fighting in Burj al-Barajneh refugee camp and the Israeli economic situation.

Quoting Arafat, local papers said that the time and place of the convening of the 17th PNC session will soon be announced.

Fighting in Burj al-Barajneh camp on the outskirts of Beirut and the death of six and injury of 28 Palestinians were given front-page coverage.

The latest sharp economic moves to raise the cost of basic foods was reported thoroughly.

THE LOST PEACE

When the Royal Academy in Stockholm awarded the Nobel peace prize three days ago to the anti-apartheid struggler Bishop Desmond Tutu, the international reaction was positive.

But the racist government of South Africa made no secret of its discontent with Bishop Tutu, described by the International Union of Protestant Churches as "the hero of the cause of the poor, the weak and the deprived." The government particularly did not forgive him for his repeated call for imposing economic sanctions on South Africa to pressure it to change its notoriously racist practices.

This positive reaction reminds us of the Nobel peace prize awarded to Sadat and Begin. What kind of reaction was that? Or perhaps it would be more correct to ask: "What kind of peace can we talk about now in the Middle East with regard to the Begin-Sadat prize?"

The occupied Arab territories are still occupied. The racist phenomenon of Rabbi Meir Kahane is sufficient enough to show what the situation in Israeli society is like. And we have the Lebanon war and its results. So what memory does the Nobel peace prize bring?

We highly praise the awarding of this year's Nobel peace prize to a struggler from South Africa. He (the Bishop) has been preceded by Zulo Albert Lotoloy, the Black African leader in 1960.

However, we cannot ignore the fact that Begin and Sadat won this prize under the American camp david umbrella.

How can we assess the Swedish Royal Academy's position in this case?

We know that we have long experience with the Nobel prizes which have so far not reached the Arabs except through Anwar Sadat and Menachem Begin.

We believe that the Arabs are not eager to win these prizes because they are fully aware that there is something questionable behind all this. We are not interested in explaining details and methods about the way the prize is awarded.

But we are interested in talking about this lost peace which the Sadat-Begin prize thought it had established in this region at a time when only more wars, disasters, depression and racism exist.

AL FAJR
October 19

FROM HERE EXACTLY

At a time when the imperialistic camp has doubled its initiatives and political moves, the state of paralysis continues in Palestinian legal institutions, thus weakening the Palestinian capability to face challenges and interpret events.

Surely, several parties would like to see the situation continue like this because it would be easier to carry out the United States' plan to reorganize the region's map.

This plan, which includes the reviving of Reagan's initiative, security measures in southern Lebanon and the creation of a new political regime in Lebanon, has been hindered by the Palestinian card.

This is why it is important that the Palestine National Council covene as soon as possible to consecrate the Palestinian political programme which carried the answers to many questions.

And by holding the frequently-postponed council meeting all attempts to impose guardinaship on the Palestinian decision will diminish.

We hope Algeria will announce its readiness to host the PNC meeting next month so that the Palestinians will renew their adherence to and support for their national unity and legitimate leadership.

AL SHA'AB
October 20

WAITING FOR THE 1988 ELECTIONS!

Just three weeks before the US presidential elections, the propaganda campaign between the two major candidates is growing stronger. It seems that the Middle East has become a topic of concern in this campaign. As far as Israel is concerned, in terms of its security and military and economic aid, the two major parties are competing to please Israel and win Jewish votes.

During Reagan's campaign, his Secretary of State George Schultz stepped in to help Reagan. One of the most important issues Schultz helped Reagan with was the Middle East problem.

Israel's security and its needs are a sacred principle for President Reagan. This is what Schultz declared in the campaign. As for peace in the Middle East, Schultz declared his country's absolute rejection of an international conference. Schultz also considered the UN resolutions on the Middle East as void of any sense.

The US secretary of state is actually disregarding the unified Arab stand on convening an international conference. The US, just like Israel, rejects this idea while the Arabs support it.

The US and Israeli ideas to revive Reagan's plan in a new form are rejected by the Arabs and the Soviet Union. And here lies the real dilemma.

The principles rejected by the Arabs are accepted by the US and Israel. And the plans acceptable to the Arabs are rejected by the US and Israel.

In view of this, we are facing more stalemate than ever before. For, the concerned Arab countries — Jordan, Syria and Egypt, as well as the PLO — declared that they will not accept any alternative to the international conference, while the US and Israel are trying to revive initiatives that have already failed. We are afraid that this situation will continue after President Reagan is reelected. We may have to wait for the 1988 elections.

AL QUDS
October 22

THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE... OR THE VOLCANO

The US rejects the convening of an international conference to solve the crisis in the region, whereas the Soviet Union and all Arab countries, together with the PLO, are in favour of convening such a conference.

It is natural that Israel would reject the conference and insist, at the same time, on bilateral negotiations with Arab countries. It absolutely rejects any recognition of the PLO or any negotiations with it. If such an Israeli attitude is natural, one may wonder, why the US is taking a similar attitude on this particular issue.

The US has recently put forward a new plan to solve the crisis. The plan totally ignores the Palestinian rights, according to the Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat. The PLO and all Arab countries, to which the plan was presented, rejected it. Indeed, the US is trying to circumvent the Arab consensus on an international conference. But its attempt has failed as has previous attempts. The US has remained firm in its anti-Arab stand.

This American stand arouses wonder, not because the US seeks peace and security in the world and not because the US stands by the legitimate rights of other peoples and by their national liberation movements... far from it.

But we want to tell the US that it stands now against the will of the international community, which seeks peace, security, stability and justice. As long as the US takes this isolated attitude, how can George Shultz, the US secretary of state, present any plans for peace in the Middle East?

The US may imagine that it can isolate this area for its own interest, and continue to reject the convening of an international conference, so that no one would share with it the 'slice of butter' subject to its sharp knife.

But the Middle East is not a slice of butter! It is an erupting volcano.

Since we are against further disasters, wars and catastrophes that may come out of the mouth of this volcano, and since we believe in peace, justice and stability for all the peoples in the region, we assert the inevitablity of convening the international conference with the participation of the US, the USSR, Israel, the concerned Arab countries and the PLO so that a desired solution might be achieved under the auspices of the UN.

AL FAJR
October 22

THE AIMS OF THE MOVE

The current intensive Palestinian political move to try to push forward efforts to bring about peace between Iraq and Iran and to stop the Gulf war has more than one important significance.

This move proves that the PLO is still practising its role and exercising its influence in important issues despite the crisis it is going through as a result of conspiracies of dissention and containment, and the destruction of its legitimate institutions.

The PLO was the first to try to stop the war when it broke out in the summer of 1982. The PLO was motivated by its keen concern for the interests of both the Iraqi and Iranian peoples. It also realised that this war serves no one except the imperialist forces which will try to exploit the battle to reinforce their influence in the area.

The Palestinian interest in stopping the war stems from the basic interest in the Palestinian cause. For this war has deprived the Palestinian people of vast support it could have had from Iran and Iraq. The hostile forces have even tried to use this war as a distraction from the Palestinian cause and to shatter the fact that the Palestinian cause is the core of the conflict in the area. The continuation cause is the core of the conflict in the area. The continuation of the war encourages the US and Israel to escalate their aggressive practices as is shown by the invasion of Lebanon in 1982.

This Palestinian move should have the full support of all those interested in putting an end to this mad war in the Gulf. They should call Iran and Iraq to the negotiating table to solve the conflict peacefully.

This move should motivate all the Palestinian National forces which signed Aden agreement to expedite the implementation of the agreement by convening the PNC and activating the legitimate institutions to enhance the Palestinian role.

AL SHA'AB
October 23,

Amnesty Condemns Israeli Jailing of Palestinians

Amnesty International has criticised Israel for imprisoning Palestinians merely for belonging to the PLO. In its 1984 annual report published in London, Amnesty says that it "does not consider that membership of the PLO alone demonstrates advocacy of violence."

The report, which covers Amnesty's activities in 1983, reveals that there was an investigation of 13 cases of people convicted of belonging to the PLO or, in two cases, of belonging to a student organisation allegedly supporting the PLO.

Those affected included students, teachers and medical personnel from the West Bank and Gaza, who were sentenced to between eight months' and five years' imprisonment.

Amnesty asked the Israeli authorities "whether there was any evidence that the convicted people had used or advocated violence."

During the year under review, Amnesty worked for the release of 50 prisoners of conscience in Israel and the occupied territories and investigated the cases of 41 possible prisoners of conscience. Of these 91, a total of 54 were released during the year. Nineteen were convicted of security offences, 44 were conscientious objectors and 28 were held under restriction orders.

The report expresses concern over "the increasing number of selective conscientious objectors" imprisoned for refusing to serve in Lebanon (and, in one case, in the West Bank). It says it has received details of 81 reservists and regulars sentenced to between 10 and 40 days' imprisonment, some of whom have served repeated prison terms. Amnesty considered them as prisoners of conscience and appealed for their unconditional release.

Detentions by the Israeli army in Lebanon "continued to be a cause of concern" to Amnesty. Referring to the exchange of six Israelis held by Fatah for almost 4500 prisoners held by the Israeli army at al-Ansar and 100 Palestinians held in Israel, the report reveals that "around 140 al-Ansar detainees were transferred to Israel some weeks before the prisoner exchange and detained in Atlit prison in accordance with an emergency regulation of August 1983. They were still being held incommunicado at the end of the year."

Amnesty was also concerned about "the increasing use of restriction orders," at least 90 of which were issued last year. Amnesty believes that "many people were restricted for the non-violent expression of their political opinions" and it opposed "the imposition of such measures in all cases since those restricted were not charged or tried and had no effective right to refute the evidence against them."

The possession of "illegal literature" is frequently used as a pretext to arrest and detain individuals, particularly students, the report alleges. (Reprint: The Jerusalem Post, October 24, 1984).

Calendar

October 26, 27, 28

At the *El-Hakawati* Theatre: Music by the *Al-Manar Groupe*, 8:00 pm. For tickets and information please phone 280-957.

October 31

At the *El-Hakawati* Theatre: *El-Hakawati* presents *'Ali the Galilean* (Matinee performance for schools).

Silwan: Lecture on Polio *Symptoms and Prevention* by Maha al-Tarireh. 5:00 pm at the Silwan Club.

YMCA: *1984 Scrabble Tournament* at YMCA East Jerusalem. Games run from October 22 until the end of December 1984. Late registration accepted until October 31. For more information contact Social and Cultural Department (Majed Kreitem) at the YMCA. Telephone: 282-375.

West Bank Colleges

Arab Nursing College

More than 150 students at the Arab Nursing College in al-Bireh began a gradual slowdown strike October 16 in protest of new administrative measures. The gradual strike escalated October 23 into a prolonged sit-in protest in the offices of college administration.

On October 16 nursing students began boycotting the regular noon meal and refusing to attend one lecture each day. Their action was in protest of an administration decision to charge the fewer than 10 students who live off campus JD5 a month to defray the costs of their noon meal. All tuition and books are free to students. The college also provides free room and board for the vast majority enrolled.

Students were also protesting a request by the administration to sign a pledge stating that students would abide by all regulations of the institution and any amendments made to these regulations during their four-year period of study.

The students escalated their strike October 20 by suspending their studies from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm. They then supplied the administration with a list of demands which were later described by the president of the college, Tawfiq Shakhshir, as "impractical and unreasonable demands." The students are demanding more freedom in the dormitories including the right to visits from non-relatives and the right to keep their own hours. They also demand the construction of an assembly hall on campus.

A third student demand is that the college administration pay each student living on campus a monthly allowance of JD15. The students say they need the money for personal monthly expenses. The administration agreed last year to submit this demand to the Council of Higher Education for review. The council did not approve the payment, however. In addition they demand that a JD300 budget per semester for miscellaneous expenses to be managed by the student council and that the administration provide health insurance for every student.

Shakhshir explained that the institute is suffering from a fund shortage, which forced the administration to cut expenses and dismiss 12 administrative employees. Shakhshir told *Al Fajr* that the administration had shown flexibility when it agreed to cancel the JD5 fee for students living off campus. But, he said, it is impossible to build an assembly hall and to pay JD15 to each resident student.

Hind Khatib, the director of employee affairs, said students should sign the pledge which deals with far more than regulations in the dormitories. The pledge stipulates that in partial repayment for a free education, resident students must agree to work for four years in West Bank and Gaza hospitals or pay JD400 and students living off campus must work for two years in these hospitals or pay JD200.

A number of the students expressed their belief that the college's administration is using the financial issue to suppress the campus student movement. Khadijeh Shehadeh, a senior nursing student, said. "The college's crisis is similar to the crisis in other academic institutions. The academic administrations are pressuring the students by raising tuition or other types of fees. The administration is aware that the role of the student movement is increasing so they plan to limit the scope of that role."

College of Science and Technology

More than 400 students in the College of Science and Technology in Abu Dis began an open ended strike October 16. Students are protesting the implementation of a college requirement whereby a comprehensive exam in English is used as a prerequisite for graduation. Students also protest the minimum passing mark of 70 percent.

The administration argues that these two regulations are not new and were included in the college catalogue at the institution's inception four years ago. Students are protesting the measure now, after four years, because they belong to the first college graduating class and are only now feeling the full effect of these regulations.

In response to the student strike, the administration closed the college dormitories and sent all resident students home. The college officials also sent letters to the students' guardians asking for their interference to end the strike.

Mohammed Qutob, the college president, told *Al Fajr* that by implementing these regulations the college wanted to graduate students with good academic records. The comprehensive exam is needed to raise the students' level in English for the purpose of offering them the opportunity to pursue their higher studies. He said the 70 percent pass mark is the minimum average for finding jobs and pursuing graduate studies. He admitted, however, that these procedures would postpone the graduation of some students, but said that in the final estimation these procedures will benefit students.

Students say it is very difficult to get a 70 percent mark in the specialised scientific courses. This will delay senior students from graduating they say, and keep freshmen from enrolling in some of the more difficult courses.

Referring to the comprehensive exam, the students complain that it is not a scientific criteria to reach a certain degree of competency in English. The administration points out, however, that most of the textbooks these students would need to read in graduate study are written only in English.

US Veto

continued from page 6

forces would be allowed in south Lebanon, meaning PLO forces, an Israeli precondition for their withdrawal, the official saw it in a slightly different light. The Syrians, he said, "aren't guaranteeing anybody anything." The impression in American governmental circles, however, is that the Syrian reply, whatever it is, "can be read as such a guarantee."

One area where the American government and Israel don't see eye to eye is the Israeli — trained and supplied South Lebanon Army (SLA). The American government, the official said, wants Lebanese sovereignty government over all of Lebanon. Israel's plans for the SLA, however, negate these American objectives, and American officials insist that such an army will never work, considering the reality of south Lebanon. The official pointed to the slaughter of 13 Lebanese Shi'ites at the hands of SLA members as the best proof it will not work.

Israel apparently disagrees with this assessment and goes on training and arming the Lahad force. While in New York for the UN General Assembly, prime minister Rashid Karami of Lebanon was quoted by the *New York Times* as saying that his government will not accept any role for the SLA nor, he continued, will his government have direct face-to-face talks with Israel about its army's withdrawal from Lebanon.

Karami, it was later reported, is not even willing to see the Lahad force integrated into the Lebanese armed forces (LAF). Karami's government does foresee a role for an expanded United Nations force in Lebanon, the dominant and only other force in south Lebanon patrolling the area with the LAF. Israel, it is reported here, is in agreement on expanding the US role, but argues that the LAF is incapable of enforcing the law in the south, whereby it can prevent PLO forces from entering the south and shelling northern Israeli settlements.

Houdini

continued from page 11

The end of the magical world is a
dust speck of grief.
I step into new orbits in the
civilised world.
A new turn of weather
A new calendar
A new touch
Another touch
Gravity will become a sign in the
encyclopedia of magic.
The heart of the mechanical man
will become the key and the chain
for the Palestinian, for his poetic
rhythm.
I am the magician Houdini, the
secret of Palestine and the magic
of Palestine.
I call upon you from within the
known,
I call upon you from within the
unknown.
Rise and witness me.
Try to see me.
Try to know me.
Try.
Stargaze into your inner soul and
you will find me.

*** *Jilqa* is Damascus.**

**** *Qibla* is Moslem direction of prayer.**

***** Muslim tradition teaches Mohammed made a journey from Mecca to Jerusalem and then to heaven in one night.**

****** The Muslim utterance is to say "In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful."**

******* The utterance "There is no power and strength save in God" was originally repeated to dismiss Satan.**

******** Jormuq is Nablus.**

Samih al-Qassem, from Haifa, is one of the foremost Palestinian poets to emerge after 1967. This poem was first published in *Al Ittihad* in August.

WEEKLY REVIEW

Graduates of the Bethlehem Nursing College take the nurses' oath at their commencement ceremonies October 18/AO photo

October 18, 1984

NOTABLES CONDEMN MEETING WITH WEINBERGER

Palestinian nationalist notables in the West Bank and Gaza Strip have condemned the meeting held by US Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger and a number of notables apparently invited as supposed representatives of the Palestinian people.

The meeting was seen as an Israeli-American attempt to create an alternative leadership to the Palestine Liberation Organisation, the Palestinian people's sole and authentic representative.

Among those who denounced the meeting were: Bassam Shaka'a, dismissed mayor of Nablus; Karim Khalaf, dismissed mayor of Ramallah; and Haidar Abd al-Shafi, the head of the Red Crescent Medical Society in Gaza.

KUWAIT TO DONATE 100 MILLION DOLLARS AID

Kuwait is to donate US$100 million towards a United Nations programme to help Palestinian refugees. Official sources in Kuwait said the cabinet had approved the aid for the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) in the Near East.

15 ANSAR DETAINEES RELEASED

Press reports received from south Lebanon said Israeli occupation forces have released 15 detainees held in the Ansar camp near Nabatiyeh.

Only one of those released is Palestinian while the other 14 are Lebanese.

JORDANIANS ALLOW VISITS TO PALESTINIAN PRISONERS

Jordanian authorities have permitted Palestinian political prisoners held in Jordanian prisons to begin receiving visitors after a two-week ban on visits.

Palestinian prisoners in al-Mahattah prison in Jordan went on hunger strike in June for 25 days. Prisoners, mostly students, were demanding improved conditions including an end to torture.

Jordanian authorities transferred the prisoners to seven different prisons in various parts of the country to force them to end their hunger strike.

YOUTHS TO STAND TRIAL

ACRE — The Israeli magistrates court in Acre is continuing its hearing of the case of six Arab youths from the village of Iksal in the Nazareth district who are charged with demonstrating and throwing stones to mark the anniversary of the Sabra and Shatila massacres.

The youths are: Atef Abd al-Hadi, Ali Abd al-Hadi, Mohammed Suleiman Abd al-Hadi, Fayez Ahmed Shalabi and Ali Omar Khaliliyeh.

YOUTH GETS 6 MONTHS FOR NOT RETURNING TO PRISON

Nabil Mustafa Zayd was sentenced by the Israeli district court in Nazareth to six months in prison on charges of not returning to prison from a vacation.

Zayd, a resident of Toubas, is serving a four-year term on charges of being involved in a melee.

October 19, 1984

PALESTINIAN BANK IN NABLUS TO BE SUPERVISED BY BANK OF ISRAEL

NABLUS — The Palestinian bank which is expected to open in Nablus will be supervised by the Bank of Israel and will not be a branch of the Arab Bank, the Israeli daily newspaper *Ha'Aretz* said.

The paper said the new bank will be financed by a number of West Bank figures, including Thafer al-Masri of Nablus.

DETAINEE ASKS FOR PERMISSION TO VISIT DETAINED WIFE

Political detainee Rasem Jawad has requested permission from the director of the Israeli prison authority to visit his wife who has been detained since August 15 in the women's prison Neve Tertza in Ramle.

YOUTHS CHARGED WITH HOISTING SYRIAN FLAG

MAJDAL SHAMS — A charge sheet has been submitted to court against two youths from the Golan village of Majdal Shams on charges of rebelling against the Israeli government and raising a Syrian flag six months ago.

This is the first time a charge has been brought against someone for raising a Syrian flag.

HEBRON RESIDENTS ROBBED

HEBRON — Unidentified persons impersonating policemen intercepted three Hebron residents travelling in a car and stole JD300 from them at gun-point.

October 21, 1984

COURT TO REVIEW YOUTH'S CASE

LYDDA — The Israeli military court in Lydda will hold a session next week in which it will look into the case of 21-year-old Maher Tutanji of Jerusalem who is accused of membership in an illegal organisation and training in weapons.

He is defended by advocate Ibrahim Nasser.

ARAB BUS BURNED IN AL-BIREH

AL-BIREH — Unidentified persons set an Arab bus belonging to the Bir Zeit-Bani Zaid company on fire in al-Bireh. The bus was completely destroyed. Police are investigating.

6 YOUTHS ON TRIAL FOR DEMONSTRATING, RAISING FLAG

AFULA — The Israeli magistrates court in Afula continued its hearing into the case of six Arab youths from the village of Eksal charged with demonstrating and raising the Palestinian flag on the second anniversary of the Sabra and Shatila massacres.

RED CROSS ALLOWED INTO 3 SOUTH LEBANON DETENTION CENTRES

Red Cross representatives have been allowed to visit three Israeli-administered detention centres in south Lebanon for the first time since Israel's invasion in June 1982, the International Red Cross (ICRC) said.

Previously, Red Cross delegates had only been able to visit the Ansar camp in the Nabatiyeh area, where prisoners are presently estimated at 970, an ICRC spokesperson said.

The camps the Red Cross was allowed to visit were at Mar Elias, east of Sidon, at Nabatiyeh and at Tyre, where 12 prisoners were visited, he said.

THIEVES CAUGHT BY VILLAGERS

KFUR AQAB — Residents of the village of Kufr Aqab caught two thieves who had unsuccessfully tried to break into a villager's home. The two were handed over to police.

October 22, 1984

JALAZON CAMP PROTESTS LACK OF SERVICES

JALAZON — Representatives of the Jalazon refugee camp near Ramallah sent a memorandum to the United Nations secretary-general and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in which they explained the hard conditions refugees are facing ever since UNRWA ceased to distribute food supplies in the camp.

The memorandum protested the reduction of services to Jalazon, which houses 6500 refugees. It said the lives of children and the elderly were at stake because of ever-increasing prices and unemployment.

YOUTH IMPRISONED FOR MEMBERSHIP

Mousa Farouq, a resident of the village of Sa'ir in the Hebron district, was sentenced by the Ramallah military court to six months imprisonment and 18 months suspended on charges of membership in an illegal organisation.

4 KHAN YUNIS YOUTHS SENTENCED

GAZA — The Israeli military court in Gaza sentenced four youths from Khan Yunis to various prison terms ranging from 18 months to two-and-a-half years after convicting them of possessing 11 Soviet-made hand grenades and manufacturing explosive charges. The youths are: Ahmed Mahmoud Sha'eth, Wisam Khaled al-Aqa, Ahmed Taysir Ghannam and Muzid Nafeth Ibrik.

NUMBER OF POST OFFICE EMPLOYEES TO BE REDUCED

JERUSALEM — Israeli authorities are planning to reduce the number of employees in East Jerusalem's main post office under the pretext of a financial crisis facing the government.

Residents have long been calling for increasing the number of these employees to facilitate services.

ATTEMPT TO BURN CLINIC

An attempt to set Dr Mousa Abu Ghosheh's clinic in al-Bireh on fire last week failed. Only the door to the clinic was burned. Police are investigating.

HEARING INTO JALAZON YOUTHS' CASE POSTPONED

The military court in Nablus has postponed its hearing into the case of eight youths from Jalazon charged with throwing stones at an Israeli army vehicle and burning tyres until November 7. The youths are: Mahmoud Abdullah Salhah, Ramadan Ahmed al-Jirmi, Riyadh Ahmed al-Kansh, Suleiman Faraj Na'man, Oudeh Abu Tair, Mahmoud Hosni al-Taraisheh and Mohammed Rajab Shaker.

X-RAY MACHINE OUT OF ORDER

JERUSALEM — Residents and patients have called for the immediate repairing of the X-ray machine at Makassed Hospital in Jerusalem. The X-ray equipment has been out of order for several days.

YOUTH CHARGED WITH MEMBERSHIP

RAMALLAH — Six youths from the village of Halhoul in the Hebron district were charged by the Ramallah military court with membership in an illegal organisation and with training in weapons use.

The youths are: Ahmed Abd al-Khader al-Sa'di, Hatem al-Sa'di, Mohammed Abu Rayan, Adel Abu Rayan, Mohammed Jafal and Nidal Salameh Shaiban.

GOREN VISITS TULKARM

TULKARM — Shmuel Goren, the Israeli coordinator of government activities in the occupied territories, visited Tulkarm and met with Mayor Hilmi Hanoun who explained to him the needs of the municipality.

Hanoun called on the Israeli official to hold general elections for municipal councils in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

MK PREDICTS NAJAH WILL REOPEN SOON

MK Abd al-Wahab Darawsheh of the Israeli Labour Party has expressed the hope that Najah University will be opened next week.

He said Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres and Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin had promised him that Najah, the largest university in the West Bank, would reopen within a few days.

YOUTHS JAILED ON 4-YEAR-OLD CHARGE

ACRE — The magistrates court in Acre sentenced three youths from the village of Kufr Manda to a IS20,000 fine on charges of painting graffiti on walls four years ago.

The youths are: Saleh Arabeh, 23; Adel Zu'bi, 24; and Anis Shinnawi, a university student studying in Belgrade.

LABOURER ATTACKED BY POLICEMEN

GAZA — Three Israeli policemen assaulted an Arab labourer from Gaza while he was working.

The labourer, Khaled Hussein Khashan, was arrested and taken to the Israeli police station in Gaza for questioning but was released the next day.

Israel Aid

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million while the year after the war, in 1974, it jumped to over US$2 billion, as shown in the Library of Congress' *Congressional Research Service (CRS)*.

It is worth noting that much of this aid is in grants or gifts to Israel. This aid, of course, is only government to government and obviously doesn't include private donations from Americans to Israel, which could easily amount to billions more, and US loan guarantees from other governmental and international organisations.

The magnitude of US aid to Israel becomes clearer when compared with that to other countries. Jordan, for example, a country with an almost similar population, long a friend to the US and with a lower per capita income (US$1319 compared with Israel's US$5543 for 1981), has received only a fraction of US assistance to Israel. According to the same sources quoted earlier, Jordan received between 1948 to 1983 US$2.195 billion, of which US$1.696 billion were in grants. In 35 years, Jordan received from the US in military and economic aid exactly what Israel received in one year, that is 1974. Morocco, another country friendly with the US, received between 1946 and 1983 US$1.660 billion.

The estimated US$4 billion to Israel for 1986, experts believe, is only the tip of the iceberg of US assistance to Israel. The US is helping Israel achieve more independence in its arms industry in addition to full American diplomatic backing and much more. It is believed here in Washington that both the US and Israel have agreed to make Israel the only Middle Eastern country responsible for stopping the 'Soviet threat' to the region. This, of course, will entitle Israel to receive all the aid necessary for that task, which could cost the American people tens of billions of dollars annually. This, it is agreed, is an alibi for providing more aid to Israel with no American or Arab complaints; who, in the final analysis, would want the USSR to gain a 'foothold' in the Middle East? No one, of course, would dare question the logic behind Israel's capability to stop the Soviet army, that is if the Soviet army really plans to invade the region.

All of these plans are being put into effect by the US government while Israel is still occupying Arab territory and subjugating Arab Palestinians. Also, these programmes will make Israel more of a regional superpower while billions of Arab dollars are invested in American banks, Arab markets are open to American products and Arab oil is pouring into US oil reserves. An American academician once said of the passive Arab governments: "Eyes they have but they don't see, ears they have yet they don't hear."

Jordan Valley

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well in Jiftlik. A Bir Zeit researcher who recently completed a study of the Fara'a canal has concluded that the drinking water is contaminated, resulting in many cases of parasites being found in farmers and their families. In the conclusion to his research, issued in September 1984, Chris Smith says that "67 percent of stored water samples [at Fara'a] had fecal caliform levels greater than 100 fc/100 ml." He says that the World Health Organisation's standard for an acceptable unchlorinated supply is only 10 fc/100 ml.

Jiftlik farmers have even more immediate problems, however. The homes of some 1000 individuals who immigrated from the Jenin and Tulkarm areas to the fertile region are threatened with demolition by the Israeli authorities. According to a Ramallah lawyer defending the farmers, authorities began harassing the farmers back in 1980. At first, authorities asked the farmers to live in one location, to which they agreed and moved. Now the Israeli planning department says that it has no room for the farmers' huts and that the area is a military zone too near to the borders. Farmers say Israeli settlements are just as near to the borders.

The latest demolition threat came from the authorities on October 15. The farmers have not left their homes, however, and so far there has been no demolition.

Palestinian farmers continue to jump from one crisis to another. While the Israeli settlement policy has sharply reduced the number of farmers because of the decreasing availability of land, farmers who have hung on still face major problems. Without the ability to dig deeply for clean water supplies, the Palestinian farmers are restricted to limited products which have an unstable market. Unless a consistent means of marketing or perhaps canning of the overabundant tomato and eggplant crops can be carried out, more farmers will find themselves at the mercy of Israeli factory labour, which in today's economy is a shaky prospect for work.

Jerusalem

continued from page 9

ture at the Union Theological Seminary of New York, who visited Jerusalem in 1838, the population of the city was 11,000 made up as follows: Moslems, 4,500; Christians, 3,500; Jews, 3,500.

Following the Russian pogroms of 1881 and 1882, a number of Jews emigrated to Palestine and settled in Tiberis, Safed and Jerusalem. In 1917 the Jewish population of Jerusalem numbered 30,000. The Jewish immigration permitted by the British during the mandate materially affected the demographic situation in Jerusalem. In 1922, according to the census of the Government of Palestine, the Jewish population of Jerusalem reached 33,971 out of a total population of 62,578 in the urban area of Jerusalem. The 1931 census shows an increase of the Jewish population to 51,222 out of a total population of 90,503 within the municipal limits of the city. At the end of 1946 the Jewish population of the City of Jerusalem, envisaged by the UN as a *corpus separatum*, had risen to 99,690 compared with 105,540 non-Jews.

After the emergence of Israel in 1948, the Israeli government sought by all means, including material inducements, to attract the Jews of the Diaspora to immigrate to Israel so as to increase the number of Jews in the country. Their number was then slightly above 600,000. Some came for nationalistic or religious reasons, others for material reasons.

Where material inducements failed to attract Jewish immigrants, Israel resorted to other means. This was the case in Iraq, in particular, where over 100,000 Jews lived comfortably and even controlled trade and commerce. It is established that in 1950 Israel's secret services arranged to throw grenades and bombs on synagogues to frighten the Jews of Iraq and to convince them that they would be more secure by immigrating to Israel. As a result of Israel's efforts, some 700,000 Jews left the Arab countries where during centuries they had been integrated in the population and immigrated to Israel.

The present population of Israel comprises 3.25 million Jews and 750,000 Palestinian Arabs. The Jewish population is a heterogeneous collection of ethnic groups possessing one common bond, namely, the Jewish religion. Socially, though not ethnically, they fall into two main groups: the *Ashkenazi* Jews (those of European origin) and the *Sephardic* Jews (those of Oriental origin or who immigrated to the Orient after their expulsion from Spain and Portugal in the 15th century).

It is the *Ashkenazi* Jews who created political Zionism, extracted from the British government the Balfour Declaration and formed the State of Israel which they now control despite the majority of its inhabitants being *Sephardic* Jews. It may be pertinent to observe that Ronald Storrs, the first British Military Governor of Jerusalem wrote: "The religious Jews of Jerusalem and Hebron and the *Sephardim* were strongly opposed to political Zionism."

The provenance of the Israeli Jews is, therefore, quite varied. But those who lived in Palestine originally or came in as refugees from Europe before the creation of political Zionism can be said to be indigenous and should be considered as Palestinians unless they have chosen to opt for Zionism.

It is important to emphasise that only the small number of indigenous Jews who, surmounting all vicissitudes, continued to live in Palestine can be said to be linked with the Biblical Jews or Israelites. All others, whether *Ashkenazis* or *Sephardics*, are not indigenous to Palestine, nor are they descendants of the Israelites. Jewish historians confirm this fact. Hence, the Jews who, under the Zionist impluse, immigrated to Palestine from Europe during the 20th century and who seized in our time Palestine and established the State of Israel are not the descendants of the Israelites who were deported by Babylon or Rome and possess no racial links with the Biblical Israelites.

Writing in 1919 in a French journal, Joseph Reinach explains that most of the Jews in Palestine have no connection with this country: "The Jews of Palestinian origin constitute an insignificant minority. Like Christians and Moslems, the Jews have engaged with great zeal in the conversion of people to their faith. Before the Christian era, the Jews had converted to the monotheistic religion of Moses other Semites (or Arabs), Greeks, Egyptians and Romans in large number. Later, Jewish proselytism was not less active in Asia, in the whole of North Africa, in Italy, in Spain and in Gaul. Converted Romans and Gauls no doubt predominated in the Jewish communities mentioned in the chronicles of Gregoire de Tours. There were many converted Iberians among the Jews who were expelled from Spain by Ferdinand the Catholic and who spread to Italy, France, the East and Smyrna. The great majority of Russian, Polish and Galician Jews descend from the Khazars, a Tartar people of Southern Russia who were converted in a body to Judaism at the time of Charlemagne. To speak of a Jewish race, one must be either ignorant or of bad faith. There was a Semitic or Arab race; but there never was a Jewish race."

In their quest for homeland to escape persecution in Europe, the Zionist Jews distorted history and invoked a racial link with the Biblical Israelites which never existed. They were thus able to practise one of the greatest historical deceptions upon the world in order to usurp Palestine and the Holy City of Jerusalem.

West Bank, Gazan Workers Need Real Solution to Unemployment Woes

For the ast 17 years of occupation, Israeli authorities have applied emergency 'band-aids' to the wound of increasing unemployment among West Bank and Gazan labourers. Israeli journalist **Yehuda Litani** feels it's time for a more permanent solution before the occupied territories explode.

Since 1967, defence minister officials responsible for the occupied territories have blown the dust off emergency contingency plans for unemployment every few years only to put them back in their drawers when the storm blew over. The plans, which consist of a detailed programme of work projects (such as road construction, forest planting, etc.) have never had to be implemented. But now, with a dire economic crisis looming on the horizon, the plans have once again been taken out and updated, for it seems that this time they will be put into effect after all.

The defence minister's public announcement of a plan for "improving the quality of life of the residents of the West Bank and Gaza Strip" implies that an economic crisis is in the offing, not only in Israel but also in the Gulf states where many residents of the occupied territories earn their living. In spite of Yitzhak Rabin's public announcements and in spite of prime minister Peres's talks in Washington, the impending crisis not only threatens the present standard of living of the population of the occupied territories but may also deteriorate into a dangerous situation.

There is a difference between the term "quality of life" and the term "standard of living" and by using the former, the minister of defence did not confine himself to economics but also took account of other areas of public life, such as decreasing the censorship of books and newspapers published in the occupied territories and East Jerusalem, the appointment of Arab mayors in place of the Jewish officials currently filling mayoral positions in some of the large cities on the West Bank, the employment of Arab clerks in the civil administration of the occupied territories, etc. By employing the term "quality of life," the defence minister sought to connote an improvement in relations between rules and subjects, which have been strained in the past. It is a demonstration of goodwill and a sign that a new chapter is about to be embarked on in the relations between Israeli authorities and residents of the occupied territories.

However, the residents themselves will probably be much more concerned about their standard of living than their quality of life. More than 100,000 residents of the occupied territories are employed in Israel, the majority of whom perform jobs that Israelis have been reluctant to undertake since 1967; these include construction jobs, factory work, cleaning and menial service jobs. Bit by bit, they left their agriculturally-oriented work and turned to jobs in the large Jewish cities which not only brought in better money, but were also somewhat less of a physical strain. After 17 years of Israeli rule in the occupied territories, the sight of Arab workers performing the most labourious jobs on the market has become quite common.

Over the past year, the escalation of the Iran-Iraq war has caused the economic situation of the Gulf states to deteriorate even further. Every year tens of thousands of residents from the occupied territories go there to find jobs that bring in more money than any work they could find at home. But now the flow is being reversed; fewer people are leaving for the Gulf and many have begun to return. Indeed, there are as many people returning as there are leaving, and the balance is shifting in favour of the returnees.

So it is that practically the only real means of escaping the economic crisis facing Israel is no longer a real option. Work in the Gulf states — which involved temporary immigration for a period of one, two or three years — was quite a common phenomenon on the West Bank even during the period of Jordanian rule. The family breadwinner would send home the major portion of his income and come home every few months for a holiday. In Ramallah, which boasts a cool and comfortable summer climate, a number of entertainment spots were established for Palestinian summer visitors who preferred to spend their money at home rather than in the deserts of Abu Dhabi or Kuwait.

With the first wave of lay-offs in Israel, many of the Jewish workers who lost their jobs asked why "Arab workers weren't laid off first." As unemployment increases, this is sure to become an issue and the demand that Arabs get the sack before Jews is sure to be made in a more vociferous and forthright manner. But Arab workers who lose their jobs have nowhere else to go. In the early seventies and up to the middle of the last decade, these workers could have been reintegrated into the agricultural sector. But today, many of the Arab workers joined the work force immediately after leaving secondary or primary school, finding employment in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Beer Sheba, the Lachish region or with road crews building by-ways on the West Bank. Many of the agricultural lands which were once worked have been abandoned; others have been expropriated by the Israeli government. Thus, only a few thousand workers who lose their jobs in Israel will be able to find agricultural work on the West Bank; and even those jobs will be hard to come by.

Over the past 17 years, Israeli policy has intentionally tied the economy of the occupied territories to that of Israel. Between 1948 and 1967, the Jordanian government clearly favoured the development of the East Bank to that of the West Bank. As a result, the economic infrastructure of the West Bank is meagre; that of the Gaza Strip even more so, for, whereas the Jordanians at least considered the West Bank to be an integral part of the Kingdom of Jordan, the Egyptians saw the Gaza Strip as occupied territory, in a manner similar to that taken by the present Israeli military administration.

Israeli defence moguls know that mass unemployment among residents of the occupied territories will mean an increase in political agitation and an escalation of terrorist attacks against Israeli targets. This scenario will impel them to do everything in their power to prevent large pockets of unemployment in the Arab population centres; needless to say, their motivation will not be based on any humanitarian impulses.

Successive Israeli governments have continued the Jordanian policy of the planned underdevelopment of the West Bank's economic infrastructure. Israel has done, next to nothing to establish industry or stimulate independent sources of employment on the West Bank. In this they have operated in a manner similar to that adopted by Jordan. King Abdullah and his grandson Hussein basically did it out of political motives; they were afraid of a Palestinian concentration that would not have to rely on the East Bank. The Israelis had similar reasons for continuing this policy: they did not want to create the groundwork for an independent Palestinian state. But there were also purely economic motives involved. Factories and economic concerns were hungry for new markets where they would not have to face competition.

Thus caught between inflation and stagflation, the minister responsible for the occupied territories, Yitzhak Rabin, has come out for a programme to improve the quality of life on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip. But even if the programme is launched, and a cement factory is opened up, a hospital near Ramallah constructed and a branch of the Arab Bank established in Nablus — all underwritten by foreign sources or the local population — these steps will have scant effect on the process that will get under way if the residents of the occupied territories are hit by mass unemployment.

Israeli governments have always operated on the assumption that the country's economic prosperity would continue and that Uncle Sam would always have bucks to spare. They believed that the flow of dollars from the other side of the Atlantic would never cease and that the stream of dinars and rials that those employed in the Gulf states send to their families in the occupied territories would never dry up. But now, residents of the occupied territories have been caught in a double bind and there is no economic infrastructure which can absorb them.

It now seems that political calculations are not always economically wise. By seeking to prevent the establishment of an economic infrastructure in the occupied territories for fear of laying the groundwork of an independent Palestinian state, we have assumed the burden of having to provide for a great number of families in the occupied territories. A Nablus businessman told me the following parable in regards to the present economic plight of the residents of the occupied territories:

Out of work Israelis looking for jobs in Beer Sheba: *"As unemployment increases, the demand that Arabs get the sack before Jews is sure to be made in a more vociferous and forthright manner. But Arab workers who lose their jobs have nowhere else to go."*

There was once an old man who having grown weary of his old wife took a young bride. His first wife, Hanna, had pulled out all the black hairs from his beard and his new wife, Manna, yanked out all the grey hairs she found. Between Hanna and Manna, the old fellow was left without a hair on his chin.

So it is, said the Nablus businessman, that between the Gulf states, Jordan and Israel, the Palestinians have been left without any real sources of revenue. All that Israel had to offer was employment. It now appears that there will be no work in Israel in the immediate future. The situation in the Gulf is deteriorating. And soon, our chins will be bereft of hairs.

As such, the declaration of the minister of defence must be judged in light of the actual situation. We are on the eve of an economic crisis and clear decisions must be taken. If the economy of the occupied territories has been integrated into that of Israel and the process of creeping annexation is accepted as final, the fate of the workers from the West Bank and Gaza should be no different from their Jewish counterparts, for they both belong to the same group. However, if they do not share the same fate and the workers from the occupied territories are laid off before their Israeli counterparts — which will doubtless precipitate a threat to the country's security in the long run, and even in the immediate future — it is incumbent on us to embark on the development of the economic infrastructure of the occupied territories, even if this implies the chance or danger (depending on your political perspective) of laying the groundwork for an independent Palestinian state or an economically autonomous region. We cannot make do with trifles; a lone cement factory in Hebron or a bank branch in Nablus just will not suffice. The present situation cannot continue — emergency plans not withstanding — for it can only mean unjustified complacency in the face of a time bomb whose ticking is getting louder and louder every minute. (Translation: HaAretz, October 12, 1984)

"Between the Gulf states, Jordan and Israel, the Palestinians have been left without any real sources of revenue. All that Israel had to offer was employment. It now appears that there will be no work in Israel in the immediate future. The situation in the Gulf is deteriorating. And soon, our chins will be bereft of hairs."